

DECEMBER 1993
Powerball winners come forward

Israel will not return antiquities

TEL AVIV (R) — The Israel antiquities authority said on Sunday it would not turn over certain artifacts from the occupied territories to a future Palestinian governing council. Authority spokeswoman Efrat Brown said Israel would keep any finds which were still under study including the Dead Sea scrolls and remains from an area near Nabulus in the occupied West Bank. Israel and the Palestinians would negotiate an exchange of other antiquities, she added. "The findings still under research will stay in the hands of Israeli researchers," Ms. Brown told Reuters. The antiquities authority launched a massive search in the West Bank in November, criticised by the Israeli archaeological society as a last-minute grab to keep archaeological finds out of Palestinian hands. Critics said the sweep was a violation of international law banning excavations in occupied territory and would only harm their efforts to establish future cooperation with Palestinian archaeologists.

Jordan Times

An independent daily newspaper
فلسطينية يومية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية العربية، الرأى

Rift shakes Palestinian alliance

DAMASCUS (R) — Two groups of a Palestinian alliance opposed to the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace deal have condemned each other, threatening to split the coalition. The Marxist wing of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) led by Nayef Hawatmeh issued a statement on Sunday accusing the Islamic fundamentalist group Hamas of making unacceptable offers to Israel and of blocking alliance meetings. The DFLP statement also accused Hamas of trying to dominate the alliance's leadership and of claiming responsibility for attacks against Israelis which it said were carried out by DFLP or other fighters. A Hamas official described the DFLP accusations as "totally false" and said a full statement would be issued later. "The DFLP calls upon brothers in Hamas to stop making vague and deluded proposals which negatively affect our opposition to the PLO-Israeli agreement," the DFLP statement said.

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Hadid visits Doha

AMMAN (Petra) — Foreign Ministry Secretary General Nayef Al Hadid left for Doha Sunday on a five-day working visit to Qatar for talks with senior Qatari officials on bilateral relations and cooperation. In a departure statement, Mr. Hadid said the talks would be a continuation of the talks His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan has held there two months ago on cooperation agreements in the economic, cultural and labour fields. He also said he would discuss arrangements of a forthcoming visit to Jordan by Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassim Al Thani.

Appeal issued for Bosnians

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation (JHCO) Sunday stressed Jordan's support for the humanitarian cause of the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina and appealed to the Jordanian public to extend every possible support to assist the people of the troubled area. In a statement issued Sunday to mark the Day of Solidarity with the People of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the JHCO called on Jordanians to provide support for the relief and aid programmes carried out by the organisation to aid the Muslim people there.

Power fault caused Salfway fire

AMMAN (Petra) — Interior Minister Saleh Hamad said Sunday a fire which engulfed the Salfway stores earlier this month was caused by an electrical fault. Mr. Hamad said the findings of a special task force formed to investigate the fire headed by Civil Defence Department Director Afif Al Ghout had confirmed that the fire resulted from an electrical spark. The task force's report was presented to the minister Sunday.

Husseini in Riyadh

RIYADH (AFP) — Faisal Hussein, head of Fateh in the occupied West Bank, arrived here Sunday for his first visit to Saudi Arabia since the 1991 Gulf war. An official accompanying Mr. Hussein said he would hold talks with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal. In August Mr. Hussein met Prince Faisal in Cairo to discuss the Saudi financial contribution to Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

Pakistan probes Israeli contact report

ISLAMABAD (R) — Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said Sunday she had ordered an investigation into reports that Pakistani diplomats had been in secret contact with Israel for a possible recognition of the Jewish state. She told reporters that she had asked the foreign ministry to hold the inquiry to check if any Pakistani diplomat had contacted Israel after local newspapers quoted the Israeli ambassador to India as saying there had been such contacts. Ms. Bhutto, who took office last October, denied knowledge of any contacts with Israel and said: "We cannot think of recognising Israel without consulting the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) and the Islamic World."

Syria urges Israel to dismantle settlements

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria urged Israel Sunday to dismantle settlements and pull out settlers from the occupied Golan Heights as a peace gesture. "Dismantling Israeli settlements in the Golan and other Arab lands is an inseparable part of the elements of a just and comprehensive peace," the official daily Tishreen said. It said that such a move by Israel would be an example of the kind of confidence-building measures the Jewish state wants Arab countries to undertake.

Crown Prince rejects talk of Jordanian-Palestinian 'rift'

Prince Hassan outlines broad vision of peace based on sovereignty, rights of refugees and cohesion

By Saad Silawi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Sunday questions raised here in Jordan over Jordanian and Palestinian identities were raised by those who imagine that there was a rift in the Jordanian society.

In an interview with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) television of Abu Dhabi and the Jordan Times and the Arabic daily Al Rai, Prince Hassan ridiculed those who question the origins of Jordanians and stressed that he believed in national unity of all citizens regardless of their origins.

"It would be irrational for Jordan, which talks about a Great Arab Revolt, and development movements, to contradict its historic message," he said.

In reply to a question on the prospect of achieving Jordanian-Palestinian confederation after Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian lands, Prince Hassan asked: "Confederation with whom?"

He said it was unreasonable to talk about such relations unless Jordan and the Palestinians develop a practical relationship from the base to the top.

Prince Hassan rejected suggestions that Jordanian-Palestinian relations were cool, saying these relations cannot be judged by using such terms. He pointed that opening branches for Jordanian banks in the Israeli-occupied West Bank



was in response to a Palestinian demand in 1986 and had nothing to do with development witnessed in the past few months.

On Palestinian refugees in South Lebanon and a Lebanese announcement that they should leave before the end of the Middle East peace process and whether Jordan was ready to receive them, the Crown Prince declared that Jordan does not accept solving a problem at its own expense.

Expressing hope that the peace process would resume in a clearer manner, he voiced belief that Arab-American summits serve only the league of "the absent coordination."

He also reiterated that there would be no peace or stability in the region without respect for human rights and human values.

He denied that Jordan and Israel had reached an initial

agreement, saying that all the two sides did was to sign the agenda for peace talks.

The Crown Prince said Jordan was not looking for an economic solution to political problems, reiterating that political problems should be tackled before economic ones.

In reply to accusations that Islam is the enemy of Western civilisation, the Prince said that he, as a member of the Hashemite family which prides itself in its origins from the Prophet Mohammad, cannot but belong to Islam "and I am an extremist in defending Islam."

Prince Hassan commended a call by UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan for Arab solidarity and said Jordan received the reconciliation call with appreciation and admiration.

Following are major excerpts from the Crown Prince's comments during the interview:

"Concerning the quest for a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and its root cause, the Palestinian problem, Jordan was always in the lead in articulating its principled stands and affirming them through all the stages of the 25 months of negotiations since the Madrid conference launched the talks and the past few weeks since August and after the Palestinian-Israeli declaration of principles."

"It was clear that the Jordanian agenda, which was not an agreement inasmuch as an arrangement of topics listed on the discussions, was a practical expression when the government approved it. This expresses the sincere will to support the Palestinian stand in a

practical way. Support for the Palestinian and the Arab identity there in the occupied territories and for the Palestinian national decision is the most Jordan can offer in these difficult circumstances. But when we talk about a regional vision and the role of countries in practising their sovereignty we cannot talk about solutions and agreements of use and content unless they tackle priorities first, such as the issues of sovereignty, borders, refugees and water. Here rises the call for discussing these issues in working groups within the framework of the multilateral talks."

"We hope that the bilateral negotiations would resume in the first or second month of next year with some clarity on the part of the negotiating parties. There is no meaning for renewing the endeavours if the goal of the negotiations is not targeted by these parties, and the goal for Jordan is very clear — and that is solving problems in a comprehensive manner."

"When we talk about Jordan's sovereign rights we talk about the problem of refugees and their right to be repatriated or to return. But the Israeli side affirms that the repatriation issue is not an Israeli affair."

"When we talk about refugees we talk about the displaced and the exiles and the human waves which entered Jordan in 1948, 1967 and recently in 1991."

"We then talk about a comprehensive vision of human resources in the region, it is difficult to solve these issues bilaterally or trilaterally and there should be a regional look to be able to talk about water and water consumers, and the world should be reminded of the human context, and that is what I told President Clinton when we

(Continued on page 5)

House retains Jerusalem in law on courts of appeals

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Monday added the city of Jerusalem to the governorates where a court of appeals could be established. The move came after leftist, centrist and Islamist deputies warned of the political implications inherent in a 1989 draft law that cancels the establishment of the court in the Holy City.

The House voted down the recommendation of its Judiciary Committee to approve the exclusion of Jerusalem from the cities in which courts of appeals could be established on the draft temporary law on the establishment of courts of

appeal for 1989 had stipulated. Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali agreed with the contention of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) members of the Judiciary Committee and other deputies who demanded that the draft law retain item (a) of Article six of a 1952 law. The article in the draft law had excluded 1989 Jerusalem.

IAF members of the Judiciary Committee had protested the decision of the committee to approve the draft law as presented by the government because it would "create a legal vacuum, leaving the Jewish court as the alternative," in Jerusalem.

They also said that Jordan's 1988 decision to sever administrative and legal links with the

West Bank "does not cancel article one of the Constitution which bans the ceding of any part of (Jordanian land)." They said that keeping the mention of Jerusalem in the law would not commit Jordan to setting up the court but that it would be a legal and historical document for Arab rights in Jerusalem.

As the amended law stands now, the government can establish courts of appeals in Amman, Irbid, Maan and Jerusalem.

While Deputy Bassam Hadadin said the draft law deals with the judiciary authority in Jordan and "Jerusalem affairs are part of Palestinian affairs,"

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Hardliners lose ground in IAF's Majlis Al Shura

By Mariam M. Shalhin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Islamic Action Front (IAF), Jordan's most powerful political party, Sunday announced a new 120-member Majlis Al Shura, which acts as the party's consultative council, after elections which saw hardliners losing ground.

By Sunday evening 117 members in 19 of the 20 electoral districts had been chosen. The so-called doves within the IAF, the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood movement, appeared to have won the vast majority of the seats. The elections of three IAF members in the Aqaba district were not yet complete as the Jordan Times went to print.

The new council includes a woman for the first time since the Brotherhood was founded in 1946.

Nawal Al Faouri, 37, a school director, is from the moderate camp. Her nomination underlined the front's effort to put on a moderate face.

Known "hawks" within the IAF failed to win seats in the council, including Lower House of Parliament deputies and IAF members Abdul Munem Abu Zant, Badr Razi and Theeh Abdullah.

The failure of the three men to win seats despite the large number of voters they received from the electorate in Nov. 8 legislative elections marked yet another chapter in what appears to be a transformation of the political strategies that the IAF as a party and the Muslim Brotherhood as a social movement are pursuing.

At a press conference Sunday, IAF Secretary-General Ishaq Al Farhan rejected the notion that his party contained "doves" and "hawks," but said that IAF members are "dovish or hawkish on certain issues."

Younger and more revolutionary members of the Brotherhood are trying to influence the political body of their movement, severely curtailing the IAF's moves to streamline the administrative and bureaucratic structure of the party.

The younger members question what they consider the timid approach the IAF is taking towards basic Brotherhood teachings, in particular Jordan's acceptance of International Monetary Fund (IMF)-prescribed reforms, and the Kingdom's participation in the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Dr. Farhan said Sunday: "Ideology and pragmatism are sometimes not compatible." He stressed that IAF members "were only human and thus have human faults" but were not at odds with each other.

Last week's resignation of six members of the party's 17-member executive committee was "null and void," Dr. Farhan said. Except for the former Brotherhood spokesman and leading executive member Ziad Abu Ghanim, none of those who had submitted their resignations boycotted the Shura elections.

Dr. Farhan told reporters Sunday that the group had contained the crisis, which he described as a result of internal

(Continued on page 3)

Hamas offers conditional truce

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, offered Sunday to halt attacks against Israelis if Israel agreed to withdraw all its forces from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"Stop all manifestations of violence from the Israeli side and ... the Palestinian side will stop all the manifestations," Mahmoud Al Zahar, a Gaza-based surgeon and leader of Hamas, said on Israeli army radio.

It was an unusual offer given Hamas' insistence thus far that it would not lay down arms against Israel until the Jewish state is supplanted by an Islamic one.

Dr. Zahar's remarks also were the latest in a series of indications that despite its opposition to the Sept. 13 Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord, Hamas was moving towards accommodation with Israel.

A Gaza military commander revealed earlier this month he had held closed-door meetings with Hamas leaders.

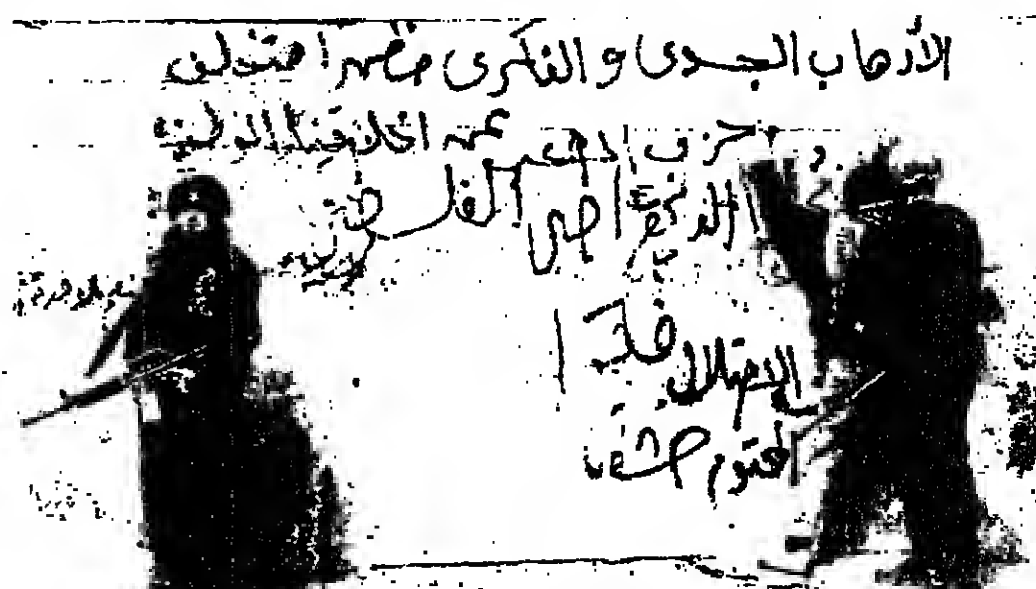
Dr. Zahar was among 400 activists Israel expelled to Lebanon in December 1992 in retaliation for the slayings of six soldiers blamed on Hamas. He was also among the 197 of those exiles who were repatriated Dec. 15, in the wake of Mideast peace moves.

In his unusual radio interview, Dr. Zahar reiterated demands published in a Hamas leaflet issued on Friday, including an Israeli withdrawal and releasing Palestinian prisoners.

The leaflet said Israel had to leave the occupied territories within a year. The peace accord calls for a limited withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho by April 1993 when Palestinians would be granted limited self-rule or autonomy.

"And I think if the Israeli

(Continued on page 5)



Israeli soldiers Sunday search a young Palestinian in Gaza (AFP photo)

Self-rule negotiations resume today with optimistic notes

CAIRO (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat said Sunday he hoped for positive answers from Israel when talks resume in Cairo on Monday on disputes that have delayed Israel's momentous withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho.

"I hope to receive tomorrow positive answers from Israel on the questions we have put to them in Oslo and Paris," Mr. Arafat told reporters between meetings with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa and President Hosni Mubarak.

Mr. Arafat declined to say what questions had been put to Israel.

But his close aide, Nabil Shaath, said ideas raised by Palestinians during intensive talks in Oslo and Paris over the last two weeks concerned the main disputes blocking agreement on the withdrawal: The size of Jericho, control of border crossings between Egypt and Gaza and Jordan and security of Jewish settlements in Gaza.

In a concession to Palestinians, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin told his cabinet Sunday that Israel was ready to double the size of the autonomous enclave around Jericho, Israeli radio said.

The report came on the eve of a meeting Monday in Cairo between Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Mr. Arafat's top aide, Mahmoud Abbas. They were to make a third attempt in nine days to reach a compromise to clear the way for a Rabin-Arafat summit and the start of Israeli withdrawal.

Environment Minister Yossi

Sarid, a member of the Israeli negotiating team, told Israel Radio after the cabinet session that "if we don't make meaningful progress in this round in Cairo, it will not be a very good sign for the negotiations."

Gad Ben Ari, Mr. Rabin's spokesman, told the Associated Press that "while we strongly hope that there will be significant progress (Monday), we will give it additional time if needed."

Cabinet ministers, speaking after their weekly Sunday meeting, said Israel would insist on keeping control over border crossings from Egypt and Jordan into Jericho and the Gaza Strip, the two autonomous regions that are to be run by the PLO.

The size of the Jericho region and control over the border crossings have been the two sticking points in the Israel-PLO negotiations on implementing Palestinian autonomy.

Mr. Rabin has said that even if the implementation agreement was signed three or four weeks after the original Dec. 13 deadline, the two sides could still meet the April 13 target date for concluding troop withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho.

Mr. Ben-Ari said Israel would not agree to any compromise that could endanger its security.

Israel Radio, reporting from the cabinet session, said Israel would offer to withdraw from about 50 square kilometres, nearly double its opening offer of 27 square kilometres, that included the town of Jericho

and two adjacent refugee camps.

However, Mr. Rabin told the ministers that Israel will not agree to let the autonomous region reach the Dead Sea to the South or include any Jewish settlements, said Trade Minister Micha Harish.

The Haaretz daily said Mr. Peres had offered the Palestinians a compromise under which the area between the autonomous region and the Dead Sea would be used for joint Israeli-Palestinian tourism and business ventures. The daily quoted Nissim Zvili, a leading figure in Mr. Rabin's Labour Party, as saying Mr. Arafat leaned towards accepting the offer. Mr. Zvili met last week with Mr. Arafat.

Dr. Shaath told Reuters in Cairo: "Every time we meet, we achieve a little bit of progress and we then look ahead for new ideas to break the deadlock."

Dr. Shaath added that on the border crossings, "Israel turned from the principles to modalities."

"We have put suggestions about the modalities to ensure our security and independence and at the same time ensure Israel's security," he said.

Dr. Shaath said Israel was still "very hesitant" about a PLO proposal to station international forces on the crossings.

He said troops could come from the United States, Europe, Egypt and Morocco.

"They are reticent in accepting any form of international presence and are shifting their feet about turning the principle into a modality."

Gunmen free all hostages in Russian kidnap before flight

Chase launched on ground

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Masked gunmen freed their last two teenage hostages and a driver on Sunday and fled after the helicopter they were travelling in landed in southern Russia, the head of the government press service said. ISTAR-TASS news agency said interior ministry forces freed the aircraft's two pilots. "Special (interior ministry) troops are now conducting an operation to arrest the terrorists," Valentin Sergeyev added on central television. Earlier Sunday, the independent television station NTV said the gunmen had fled, pursued by interior ministry troops. ISTAR-TASS news agency said the helicopter had landed briefly near Khassavurt, in the southern Russian republic of Dagestan, then flew on to a site near airport in the suburbs of Makhachkala, Dagestan's capital 80 kilometres away. It was there that the gunmen left the aircraft and fled for an unknown destination, the agency said.

had said they would free the driver.

They have pledged to let the two pilots go only when they reach Iran.

Visibility down to 60 metres forced them to wait a day. A first attempt to leave Mineralniye Vody overnight failed and the helicopter was forced to return.

Under an agreement reached earlier with the four gunmen, and now apparently abandoned, the two schoolboys and his driver were to be released in exchange for fuel and negotiator Valentina Petrenko in Makhachkala.

They would then fly on to Baku, where Petrenko, personal envoy of Foreign Minis-

ter Andrei Kozyrev, would be freed before the hostage-takers flew onto the Iranian capital, ISTAR-TASS said.

A photographer who left Mineralniye Vody on Sunday morning quoted security officials as saying that the four heavily armed kidnappers had made "no mistakes so far."

They had planned their operation with military precision and brought along equipment to check for forged banknotes.

The identities of the gunmen, who have said they are carrying the virus that causes AIDS remains a mystery, although an artist's impression of one of the men was broadcast by Russian Television Saturday evening.

Hamas fighters are Gaza's idols

By John West
Reuters

OCCUPIED GAZA — They are the nearest thing Gaza has to pop stars. Young boys scrawl their names on walls. Parents name their children after them. They are immortalised in song.

Like all good pop stars, the militants of the Muslim fundamentalist group Hamas live fast and die young, going down in a blaze of glory, and taking with them as many Israelis as possible.

The outside world may never have heard of Imad Akel, Zakaria Al Shurbaji or Hamed Al Qirawi.

But across the slums and squalid refugee camps that cram 800,000 Palestinians into the Gaza Strip, their exploits are recorded on cassette tapes which capture their unique status as Muslim religious martyrs, nationalist heroes and pop idols.

The recordings are available at most street corners.

"In the name of God the Compassionate the Merciful," invokes the singer of the Jabalya Martyrs Band, accompanied by synthesised drumming, "the band offers you this tape under the title 'Commanders of Qassam,' we hope you'll like it."

A street seller named Ahmad blasts the songs on a portable music system just metres from an Israeli army post in Jabalya camp, the cradle of the Palestinian uprising in 1987.

"Do you want to buy religious songs?" he asks. "These are the latest."

Political analysts speak of the rise of Hamas as the triumph of Muslim fundamentalism, disillusionment with perceived corruption and authoritarianism in the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), or the inevitable logic of desperate poverty and foreign occupation.

At street level, Hamas and other activists are warriors fighting an epic struggle, the pride of Gaza amid the poverty and anarchy that prevail in the strip.

"While the PLO negotiates with Israel, Hamas, the PLO's chief rival, is winning its brutal terms that count for many Gazans. Hamas has claimed 13 of the 20 killings of Israelis since a historic September

peace accord.

It rejects the peace deal. Israel's planned withdrawal from the Gaza Strip is only a first step in the Hamas rule book. The fundamentalist group is devoted to Israel's destruction.

The songs are part of a culture of warrior heroes, underpinned by religious faith, that has sprung up in the Strip where most other paths to achievement remain closed. Gaza has no rock singers, football wizzards or dashing young tycoons.

Glory is more important than life and death — and glory comes through fighting. "Imad Akel opens his jaws to strike, the Nazi enemy is on guard," sings the band, comparing Akel to a lion. "The commandos kidnap (Israeli) soldiers and kill them."

"Saleh Othman's eye does not sleep. He tightens his belt on the day of the operation...he took the weapon and said goodbye to his loved ones and made the greatest story with his blood," the singers chant.

Mothers are expected to be proud, not to grieve for fallen sons. "Come, mother, bring everyone and see his weapons."

Most people in Gaza know the names of dozens of "martyrs" and colourful stories of how they died.

By contrast, many would be hard-pressed to name more than a couple of the PLO officials who present them politically in the negotiations with Israel.

"That's where Zakaria was martyred about six months ago," says Iyad, a student of about 20, pointing to a now demolished tenement block. "Didn't you see it? There was a crew from Israeli TV there and they filmed it — the first time an operation has been filmed."

"He killed a soldier and then stayed to cover four others who ran away while the army fired. You should have seen him. He was huge, like a body-builder. The Kalashnikov looked like a toy in his hands he was so big," added Iyad enthusiastically.

There are gruesome details to many stories. Zakaria was blown apart by a rocket and had to be picked up in pieces.



An arrested Palestinian man with his frightened daughter sits with other arrested Palestinians in an Israeli army jeep (AFP photo)

Gaza's youth wait for jobs but with time in prison as only degree

By Acl Tabbara
Agence France Presse

OCCUPIED GAZA — Gaza's youth are waiting for Palestinian autonomy to bring them jobs but the only qualification most of them have is time in Israeli jails.

Around 75,000 residents, or 10 per cent of the occupied Gaza Strip's population, have done time since the intifada broke out in December 1987, according to Raji Surani, director of an Arab centre for human rights.

Most of them have been under 22.

For young men who meet in Gaza, the first question is often whether they have been jailed and in which camp. Rather like asking "whether did you go to school?" in other parts of the world.

"The question of former prisoners is a big problem," admits Ihab Al Ashkar, a member of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction, who himself has seen the

inside of an Israeli jail.

Mr. Ashkar said around 40,000 young Gazans were former detainees, most of them unemployed and with a secondary school certificate at best.

"We have proposed drawing up a training project for these youths, offering them computer courses, for example, to help them find jobs in the future," he said.

"This is one of the main challenges facing the future Palestinian authority" under the Sept. 13 autonomy deal signed by Israel and the PLO. Hatem Ferwana, who has spent four of his 22 years in prison for being a member of Fatah, firmly believes that self-reliance will bring employment.

"I was jailed when I was 16 and so I couldn't carry on with my school education. All I know how to do is to paint cars and I can't find a job," he said.

The job market in Gaza is saturated and 11,000 men have applied for 3,000 posts in a Palestinian police force, which is to take over security after an

Israeli army withdrawal.

But a high school degree is a must to join the police.

Unemployment is running at around 80 per cent in Gaza City, a huge shantytown where industries and services hardly exist, according to Mr. Surani.

Almost 6,000 Gazans are still in jail.

Some 85,000 Gazans worked in Israel before the Gulf war in 1991. But in three years, the number has fallen to 15,000 because of Israeli restrictions on entry into the country.

In any case, former prisoners are automatically banned from working in Israel. They are also not allowed to travel and come back, except for rare cases.

Like many other prisoners, Mr. Ferwana used his time inside the Ketziot camp in southern Israel to learn Hebrew from his cell-mates.

"We call the detention camps universities," said Sami Sawafiri, 23, who spent 30 months in jail for belonging to Fatah.

"At the start of the intifada,

when the Israelis arrested thousands of youths, we decided that their stay in prison should not be a waste of time," Mr. Sawafiri said.

He said daily programmes were organised and each prisoner taught the others what he knew: Language courses, training in sports, political discussions and other activities.

Detained for the first time when he was 18 and the second time during his first year in university, where he was majoring in pharmacy, Mr. Sawafiri gave up his studies.

"Now, I'm just waiting and hope that with autonomy we will have the chance to work."

Another prison graduate, 26-year-old Nassr Fleyfel, who spent four and a half years in jail, is considered lucky for being accepted to the police force. But he no longer wants to join up.

"They seem to have lined us up for traffic duty," said Mr. Fleyfel. He wanted to leave for good, but only after his best friend comes out of prison.

Egypt — battle for the mosque

By Khaled Dawoud
The Associated Press

CAIRO — From a mosque in 7th century Arabia, the Prophet Mohammad began spreading the faith of Islam. Today, Egypt's government is fighting to keep Muslim extremists from spreading revolution from the mosque.

In Cairo's sprawling Imbaba district, once a militant stronghold, authorities have closed at least a dozen makeshift prayer centres crammed into hallways and alleys and run by the radical Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah.

Throughout the country, the Ministry of Religious Endowments plans to take over more than 7,000 mosques that were controlled by extremist groups, many of whose members have fled or been jailed.

It's a battle for the soul of Egypt. Islam pervades Egyptian life. In Cairo, the call to Friday noon prayers sounds from loudspeakers in every direction, drowning even the ubiquitous horn-blowing. Prayer mats are spread across busy downtown streets to accommodate the faithful. More than 90 per cent of Egypt's 58 million people are Muslim.

In downtrodden areas like Imbaba, the fundamentalists seized on the people's traditional faith to implant a more adamant Islam. For the past two years, militants have waged a violent campaign to supplant the secular government with Islamic rule. More than 240 people killed in radical attacks or clashes with police.

But Abdul Ghaffar Mohammad, a resident of Imbaba for 10 years, said he believes the government is loosening the radicals' grip.

"The fall of the Islamic republic of Imbaba started the day the government took over the Gamaa's mosques," he said.

Mohammad Abdul Monem Saeed, a political analyst at the Al Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, said the government's approach was astute but faced a major barrier.

"The government is...controlling the message it conveys to the people," he said. "But the problem is that there will always be more mosques than

the Ministry of Endowments can control."

In fact, no one knows how many mosques there are in Egypt.

Cairo is known as the city of 1,000 minarets, but there are thousands of small, private mosques in addition to historic and official ones. The same is true throughout Egypt, where those who build mosques also get tax breaks.

Since mosques are exempt from the law requiring government permits for public gatherings, radicals had ample chance to spread their message in sermons and in talks with young men after the five daily prayers.

Mr. Saeed said that since the rise of the Islamic movement in the 1970s, militants gathered recruits and made plans in mosques, and the Interior Ministry accuses "terrorists" of storing weapons there, too.

Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah saw the mosque, as a way to build an alternative to the government. In Imbaba and other poor areas, it opened schools and clinics alongside mosques to serve people largely ignored by the state.

Imbaba, with a population of about 1.2 million, is inhabited mostly by poor southern Egyptians who came to Cairo for jobs and a better life. It grew as a squatter area not officially recognised as part of the city and receiving almost no services.

A year ago, with the radicals tightening their hold on Imbaba, the government sent in armoured personnel carriers and about 14,000 troops. They arrested more than 700 suspected leaders of Al Gamaa.

Now, the government is taking over the mosques, using graduates of state-funded Al Azhar Islamic University to replace the fiery preachers who rallied against government crackdowns. The mosque doors are closed after each prayer so radicals cannot gather.

But Sherif Wagdy, an 18-year-old student from Imbaba, said the government-paid preachers will not tame the anger of the youth.

Wagdy said he went to the radicals' mosque as a place "where I can learn the truth" instead of hearing platitudes from preachers at official mosques.

Pollard does not regret spying for Israel

By James Rowley
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Despite a pending plea for clemency, from President Bill Clinton, convicted spy Jonathan Pollard has made statements indicating he does not feel remorse for passing U.S. secrets to Israel.

"Granted, I broke the law. But to tell you the truth, I'd rather be rotting in prison than sitting shiva (mourning) for the hundreds of thousands of Israelis who could have died because of my cowardice," Mr. Pollard was quoted as saying in the April 30 issue of the Jewish magazine, Sh'ma.

The statements Mr. Pollard has made in the past did not come to the attention of the news media until they were republished recently by other Jewish publications. Mr. Pollard continued to embrace the statements in a June 1 letter from prison praising the Sh'ma article as "the first piece that truly reflects my inner feelings."

In the article, written by

Rabbi Avi Weiss, Mr. Pollard discussed his feelings about passing thousands of pages of top secret intelligence data to Israel, including satellite photos of Libyan anti-aircraft bases.

Before Mr. Pollard pleaded guilty and was sentenced in 1987 to a life term, the former U.S. Navy civilian intelligence analyst told the judge in court papers that he was motivated by a belief that the Pentagon was withholding valuable information that Israel needed to thwart its Arab enemies.

"I could not just walk away from the intelligence embargo and pretend that it didn't exist. I had to act," the 39-year-old Pollard, who is a Jew, was quoted as saying in the Sh'ma article.

These statements "show the guy is not remorseful and never has been," said Joseph Digenova, a Washington lawyer who is U.S. attorney in Washington prosecuted Mr. Pollard.

Mr. Pollard "doesn't" even meet the fundamental re-

quisites for clemency," Mr. Digenova said. "For anyone to seriously consider clemency for him is absolutely unconscionable."

Mr. Pollard's clemency petition has been pending at the Justice Department for a year. Israel asked President Clinton earlier this year to free Mr. Pollard, who has been in prison since his arrest in November 1985.

Mr. Clinton said this week that he expected to announce a decision soon.

Deputy Attorney General Philip Heymann is considering recommending that Mr. Clinton cut Mr. Pollard's sentence but require him to remain in prison for an unspecified number of years, according to administration officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Mr. Pollard will be eligible in November 1995 to be considered for parole. But law enforcement officials say they do not think the U.S. Parole Commission will release him at that time. Under federal law, Mr. Pollard must be released after serving 30

years, in 2015.

The State Department, and all other federal agencies that have an interest in the case, including the U.S. attorney's office, have all recommended against clemency.

Defence attorney Theodore B. Olson said Mr. Pollard's "story is consistent that he regrets what he did. He feels badly about the harm that was done."

Mr. Olson said that the action of Jewish publications in picking up last April's article is "a distraction which is not constructive."

Mr. Weiss argued that Mr. Pollard's remarks do not in any way diminish the sincerity of his "deep and profound remorse."

Weiss' article goes on to say "Jonathan deeply regrets the tremendous cost of his actions," the cost to the health of his ex-wife, Anne, the cost to his marriage; the cost of this incarceration, the agony of isolation and the mental torture he has been forced to endure."

Settlers spar with visiting PLO official

By Said Ghazali
The Associated Press

ON THE ROAD TO JERUSALEM, Occupied West Bank — A visiting Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) dignitary, witnessed firsthand the fervor of some Israelis' opposition to the Palestinian autonomy accord Friday as he toured the occupied West Bank.

"We live here in our country," settler Yoel Cooperman shouted at Afif Safieh, the PLO's envoy to London who is visiting family for Christmas.

Mr. Cooperman was one of some 50 settlers laying the cornerstone for a new settlement on a hill just outside East Jerusalem.

Mr. Safieh remained stoic as Mr. Cooperman, a thirtyish, U.S.-born resident of the nearby settlement of Maale Edumim, rushed to his car. "This was always my land, since I was born as a Jew," Mr. Cooperman said.

Mr. Safieh did not understand. But his Hebrew-speaking aide, Ibrahim Matar, engaged the Israeli with taunts of "Go back to the United States."

In the Jewish neighbourhood of Pisgat Zeev north of Jerusalem, Mr. Safieh was approached by Rahamin Shamin, a 57-year-old Israeli construction worker, who advised him the Palestinians will never control any part of Jerusalem.

Israel claims the entire city, while Palestinians want its eastern sector, seized by Israel in 1967 and later "annexed," as the capital of their envisaged future state. "Jerusalem is the eternal capital of Israel, for 4,000 years," Mr. Shamin said. "How can you still want Jerusalem?"

Mr. Safieh moved away, curiously watching Mr. Shamin a good day.

He later told the AP Israel should remove 280,000 Jews living on Palestinian land.

His figure included some 150,000 Jewish residents of East Jerusalem who are not considered settlers by Israel. Israel usually puts the number of settlers at 130,000.

"They should leave the settlements as part of the compensation that the Israeli state owes Palestinian society," said Mr. Safieh, 43-year-old political scientist.

His tour coincided with attempts to lay cornerstones at 72 sites settlers hope will eventually become full-fledged settlements.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres told Israel Radio the government would not permit any new settlements.

The item news agency said soldiers were sent to several of the sites and that the settlers agreed to disperse. No incidents were reported.

The settlers have been at the forefront of right-wing opposition to the Israel-PLO accord signed in September in Washington.

The accord grants the Palestinians autonomy, first in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho and later in the entire West Bank. Implementation of the accord, planned to begin last week, is being delayed by disagreement over several

key issues.

Talks on the final settlement — involving thorny questions over borders and the ultimate fate of Jerusalem and the settlements are delayed until 1996. But many Israelis are already raising such issues.

"We who came here to live in the heart of the country will find ourselves on the borders and living in the shadows of continued terrorism," said right-wing legislator Michael Eitan at a ground-breaking ceremony outside the Kochav Yair settlement.

Mr. Safieh termed the settlers' actions Friday "an insult to the international community...that fully supports an equitable, peaceful solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict."

Mr. Safieh, a Belgian national who is visiting his mother and sister in Jerusalem for a two-week Christmas vacation after some 25 years abroad, said he intended to settle here eventually.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDER

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:30 ... Les Aventuriers de L'Espace
18:00 ... La Stricte Dimension
18:30 ... News in French
19:00 ... News in English
19:15 ... The weekly sport magazine
19:30 ... News in Hebrew
20:00 ... News in Arabic
20:30 ... Delta
21:10 ... Olivia Estephan in concert
22:00 ... News in English
22:20 ... The International Magic Awards

PRAYER TIMES

05:06 ... Fajr
10:29 ... (Sunrise) Duhr
11:30 ... Duhr
14:30 ... Asr
16:43 ... Maghrib
18:06 ... Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweileh, Tel. 810741
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 832765
St. Joseph Church Tel. 824941

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 638851, Tel. 638543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771131
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775361
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625526
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 664195
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Clouds will appear at various altitudes, scattered showers are expected in all parts of the Kingdom, winds will be southeasterly moderate. In Amman it will be partly cloudy and scattered showers are expected, winds will be northerly moderate and very calm.

Min./Max. Temp.
Amman 8 / 16
Aqaba 12 / 22
Djersin 5 / 18
Jordan Valley 13 / 24

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 18, Aqaba 22 Humidity readings: Amman 54 per cent, Aqaba 44 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Mahmud Hindi 888787
Dr. Rafeq Zaytoon 888881
Dr. Mohammad Abbad 778959
Dr. Bassem Kuradseh 790201
Fire pharmacy 641012
Ferdows pharmacy 876536
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nairookh pharmacy 626672
Al Salam pharmacy 626730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmawati pharmacy 637661
Nairookh pharmacy 626672
Najih pharmacy 847632

ZARQA:
Dr. Fawaz Hamid 903644
Khalil pharmacy 965417

EMERGENCIES
Fixed Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891226
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 643402
Traffic Police 896391
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 668081
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 101020
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 660100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 626381

IRBID:

Dr. Fawaz Al Qadi 248745
Alquds pharmacy 1-1

RJ Flight Information 18-53300
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 18-53300

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khulidi Maternity, J. Amn 643216
Aklied Maternity, J. Amn 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642462
Mulham, J. Amman 626140
Palestine Shmehani 664171/4
Shmehani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Bustan Hospital 667279
Queen Alia Hospital 6224950
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 7751126
Army, Marka 891611/5
The Islamic, Abdali 6612737
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 7751126
Army, Marka 891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital 6224950
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 109983323
Zarqa National Hospital 10998561
The Sina Hospital 109986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital 109986940
IRBID:
Prince Beama Hospital 02127555
Greek Catholic Hospital 02127275
The Al-Nafes Hospital 02127101
AQABA:
Prince Haya Hospital 10331411

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. 109983345, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:10 Sanaa (RJ)
08:55 Damarcus (RJ)
09:00 Jeddah (RJ)
09:30 Riyadh (RJ)
09:55 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:00 Beirut (RJ)
10:20 New Delhi (RJ)
10:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
11:00 Bangkok (RJ)
11:45 Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
09:35 Cuira (MS)
10:00 Khartoum (SD)
12:25 Abu Dhabi (GF)
18:45 Dubai (EM)
01:10 Amsterdam (KL)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:00 Beirut (RJ)
11:30 Roma (RJ)
11:35 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
11:50 London (RJ)
12:05 Frankfurt (RJ)
12:45 Cairo (RJ)
20:00 Dhahran (RJ)
20:15 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
20:30 Riyadh (RJ)
20:50 Damascus (RJ)
22:00 Al-Dhahran (RJ)
22:00 Abu Dhabi Muscat (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
06:00 Istanbul (TA)
06:15 Beirut (ME)
10:25 Marrow (large) 201 / 100
11:00 Marrow (small) 351 / 300
13:30 Olives (green) 700 / 200
19:45 Bahrain, Abu Dhabi (GF)
02:15 Amsterdam (KL)
HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN
Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in lbs per kg

Apples 7



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Sunday, visits the Latin Patriarchate in Sweifiyeh to congratulate Christians on the occasion of Christmas. Present in the audience were (from left) Minister of Awqaf and Religious Affairs Abdulsalam Al Abbad, Greek Patriarch Diodorus, Anglican Bishop Elia Khoury, the King's Religious Advisor Izzeddin Al Tamimi and Roman Catholic Bishop Salim Sayegh (Petra photo)

Crown Prince congratulates Christians on Christmas

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Sunday stressed Jordan's keen interest in enhancing understanding among its people.

During a visit to the Latin Patriarchate in Sweifiyeh to offer congratulations to all Christian sects on the occasion of Christmas, Prince Hassan affirmed Jordan's keenness to protect the rights of all Jordanians, regardless of their origin. The Crown Prince conveyed the King's best wishes to all Christian sects and stressed that common aspects of the members of the Jordanian family should be highlighted and enhanced to help develop the Kingdom.

He pointed to the resumption of Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem after a stoppage

of six years and improvements in the prospects of achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

He also underlined the importance of safeguarding human rights in the Middle East, saying this region, which is the cradle of civilisation and religions, deserves more concern from the civilised world.

Sunday, Prince Hassan visited the Chief Justice Department where he chaired a meeting attended by Chief Islamic Justice Izzeddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi, who is also the King's advisor on religious affairs, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Minister Abdul Salam Al Abbad, Director General of the Industrial Development Bank Taher Kanaan and the Prince's Private Advisor

Mohammad Al Saqqaf.

Prince Hassan issued directives on the need to enhance coordination between the Chief Justice Department and the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, particularly concerning lands allocated for charity purposes.

He also stressed the importance of activating the role of Waqf (religious endowment) institutions to enable them to play their role in meeting the society's needs in various fields.

Prince Hassan was briefed by Dr. Abbad on the ministry's preparations for the holy month of Ramadan which will start in February. He said the ministry will launch during the fasting month cultural programmes which emphasise the values of faith and tolerance.

No salary increase for civil servants this year, but options under study

By P. V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government is not planning any salary increases for civil servants during fiscal 1994, but is considering a series of options aimed at bettering living conditions on a national level, senior officials say.

While an across-the-board hike in wages is ruled out, the officials say, the government might offer "incentive-oriented" increases for civil servants, based on their performance of work and agreement to work under difficult conditions.

The officials noted that no provisions for salary increases were made in the draft budget for 1994, now before parliament, and that the government would be hard put to offer any hikes during the year because of financial constraints.

They also pointed out that the government could not offer any increases to civil servants since it was bound by the economic restructuring programme agreed upon with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). One of the provisions in the programme is a freeze in wage increases for the public sector, except for token annual increments.

The annual increment is automatically applied to civil servants except for cases cited by supervisors as poor performance of duties.

In 1993, the government offered an across-the-board increase of JD15-JD20 to civil servants and security personnel, including the armed forces, as well as pensioners, the first salary increase for the sector since 1989.

"That was an exceptional measure, given the visible rise in the cost of living and inflation," said a senior official, recalling that inflation during the previous year was more than eight per cent. Inflation during 1993 is not expected to go up beyond four per cent, officials say.

The IMF, which was faced with the salary increase as a *fait accompli*, "grudgingly accepted the measure as a quid pro quo for introducing sales tax," said the official, who preferred anonymity.

The government was supposed to have introduced the sales tax at the beginning of 1993, to replace the consumption tax which went into

effect in 1992, but political considerations in an election year delayed the sales tax, which is now expected to be introduced in the first quarter of 1994.

Officials also say that it Parliament insists on a wage increase and makes its approval of the budget conditional on a hike, then the budget would have a deficit.

The JD 1.487 billion draft budget for 1994 is described as the Kingdom's first deficit-free budget since local revenues and JD 156 million in foreign aid cover all current expenditures and part of capital expenditures.

The budget does not include JD 300 million projected as Jordan's needs to service its foreign debts. The government expects external financing to cover this cost.

The increase offered in 1993, which was promised during the parliamentary debate on the fiscal budget but took retroactive effect in April, is estimated to have cost the government around JD70 million. The official bureaucracy employs more than 400,000 people, making the public sector the largest employer in the country.

The government is considering a programme of

incentive-oriented salary increases for civil servants who excel in their performance of duties," said another senior official. "Also, people who agree to be located in outlying regions might be given an increase."

Such increases are acceptable to the IMF, the international economic watchdog, and the World Bank, which help countries implementing economic readjustment programmes develop and upgrade the efficiency of government departments.

Reluctance to work in rural regions is characteristic of most civil servants, who like to live and work in the capital or other major urban centres.

Civil service experts say that even those who agree to be located in outlying regions as a condition for employment do so with their eyes set on using their "connections" to be moved to Amman or other urban centres at the first available opportunity.

"It is not enough that people accept employment in rural areas," said one expert. "They have to stay there and perform their duties with an acceptable level of commitment and dedication."

The officials said such parameters would be taken into

considerations in the "incentive-oriented programme," but cautioned, however, that "these are all ideas and options under study, nothing is on paper yet."

According to the officials, the government will also seek to improve the effectiveness of assistance extended through the National Aid Fund as well as the Development and Employment Fund.

They said an "array of options" was under consideration. Again, nothing has been finalised yet, they added.

The draft budget for 1994 reflects an increase in allocations for the two aid funds while JD 6 million have been reduced from allocations for food subsidies.

"While there is no direct linkage between the reduction in subsidies and the increased allocation to the two funds, the increase could be attributed to the savings that the government expects to make by cutting subsidies," said Dr. Fahed Fanek, columnist and economist.

The government is planning a move to ensure that only the needy benefit from the food subsidies by limiting the availability of subsidised items to people who earn less than JD 500 per month.

IAF hardliners lose ground

(Continued from page 1)

differences "among the rainbow colours in our movement."

"The crisis that the front faced in the last two weeks showed that the front and its members are not immune to differences, but we overcame the problems in a very short time," Dr. Farhan said.

But the lineup of the new council, where an overwhelming majority of members are known moderates as opposed to the hawk-led predecessor, clearly indicated that the doves had prevailed.

The front has nearly 3,000 registered members, and claims more than 100,000 hardcore supporters.

Much of Sunday's press conference which was also attended by deputies Hamzeh Mansour, Mohammad Owaideh and Bassam Aloush, was focused on the IAF crisis.

According to Dr. Farhan, Mr. Abu Ghannieh's charges that the IAF was trying to liquidate the Muslim Brotherhood as a political and social force in Jordanian society and that the IAF itself was steering towards policies of accommodation with the existing non-Islamic orders in the country were "personally motivated

and not politically sound."

"Mr. Abu Ghannieh was upset that he was not nominated as an IAF candidate for Amman Second District in the legislative elections. He saw that he was losing ground and thus he resorted to going public with the IAF's internal issues and blew them out of proportion," Dr. Farhan said.

Mr. Abu Ghannieh, a long-time Brotherhood member on the IAF's executive committee, has argued that pro-establishment members were steering the political policies of the IAF towards "accommodation" rather than constructive opposition.

Mr. "Abo Ghannieh's attempts to secure membership for some 300 like-minded Brotherhood members into the IAF one week before the Shura elections created an open rift last week, when Dr. Farhan adjourned an executive committee meeting after refusing to grant last-minute membership to the Abu Ghannieh-backed activists.

Dr. Farhan said Sunday that IAF membership had been frozen since October but that as of January up to 900 new applications for membership would be reviewed. The Majlis Al Shura will elect a new executive council next week.

Saleh praises King Hussein's efforts to defuse Yemeni crisis

SANAA (Petra) — Speaker of the Yemeni Lower House of Parliament Abdullah Al Ahmar Sunday lauded the sincere efforts made by His Majesty King Hussein to contain the crisis between Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his Vice President Ali Salem Al Beedh.

Mr. Al Ahmar's statement was made during a meeting he had with Jordan's Ambassador to Yemen Fayez Al Rabie, who conveyed to him the greetings of King Hussein and those of his counterpart, Taher Masri.

In an interview with Jordan Television, broadcast Saturday night, President Saleh said King Hussein was very concerned about the onset of the crisis and had sent letters to both the Yemeni president and his deputy, through the Royal court chief, Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker.

President Saleh said a special committee grouping representatives of the General People's Congress and the Socialist party of Mr. Al Beedh was formed to work out an acceptable formula for the current dispute between the Yemeni leaders.

Results of the meetings of the committee will be communicated to King Hussein for his "blessing and final touches," President Saleh said.

President Saleh voiced hope that the Yemeni press and parties will follow the same path Jordan's parties and press have been following. He voiced satisfaction with Jordan's democratic experience, describing it as responsible and successful. He stressed the need for control governing democratisation and political pluralism.

In a favourable development, the Yemeni president agreed Saturday to hold a meeting with Mr. Al Beedh on Jan. 9, according to reports in the Jordanian Arabic dailies. The meeting was suggested by Yemeni scholars and ulema, who proposed that such a meeting take place at one of the mosques of Al Jund city, 130 kilometres south of the Yemeni capital Sanaa.

Al Dustour Arabic daily said President Saleh and his deputy are expected to meet in Amman soon to settle their differences. The paper did not eliminate the possibility of a third visit by Sharif Zeid to Sanaa to



Ali Abdullah Saleh

carry Royal messages to President Saleh and Mr. Al Beedh.

Asked to comment on such a meeting, Jordan's Ambassador to Yemen Fayez Al Rabie said in a telephone interview that everything was possible. He added that the Jordanian initiative is the only way out of this crisis because King Hussein enjoys the appreciation and respect of all parties.

Cabinet approves 1994 projects

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Saturday approved the German aid programme to Jordan for the year 1993, under which Germany provides financial and technical aid for some projects, carried out by the government.

The Cabinet also approved Jordan's participation to the meeting of ministers of culture, due to be held in Beirut from Jan. 8 to Jan. 20.

It also approved the Ministry of Tourism's participation in an international tourist exhibition, which will be held in the Netherlands during the first week of January.

Meeting under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali, the Cabinet approves the application for licence for a new Arabic weekly, "Al Rasad". The new weekly will be issued by Masaadeh and Tummaleih company.

The Cabinet also approved a request by the Health Ministry to hold two workshops on AIDS for communicators and secondary school teachers.

78,901 students to sit for first-term tawjihi exams

AMMAN (Petra) — Some 78,901 students Monday morning head for 1,051 examination halls, around Jordan, to sit for the first term of their general secondary school certificate examinations (Tawjihi).

The only examination hall abroad is the one in Tunis. Students sit for examination in the scientific, literary, commercial, vocational, nursing and hotel management streams.

Director of the Ministry of Education's Examinations Department Mohammad Sayel Obeidat said the Kingdom's education departments had finalised their arrangements for the tawjihi examinations, which will end on Jan. 8, 1994.

Offering advice to students who will sit for the exams, Dr. Obeidat urged them to abide by regulations and rules and

not to commit malpractices that might endanger their chances of success.

Students, he said, should write down all personal information clearly and before starting to fill their answering sheets. He also asked them not to hesitate in informing the Ministry of Education of any incident that might take place during the exam periods.

On Sunday, a meeting was held at the Ministry of Education under the chairmanship of Minister Khaled Al Omari to review the ministry's preparations for the examinations.

Dr. Omar said at the meeting that the ministry pays due attention to the examination and that it had been working on preparing the proper atmosphere for students to sit for their exams.

WHAT'S GOING ON EXHIBITIONS

★ The second exhibition of engineering books of the Jordan Engineers Association.

★ Exhibition on the 100th anniversary of the death of French novelist Guy De Maupassant at the French Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition of Iraqi books at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Art exhibition by artists Ibrahim Al Abduli and Abdul Hussein Twajj at Alin Gallery.

★ Art exhibition by a number of Jordanian artists entitled "The Sixth Exhibition — Samples From The Contemporary Jordanian Art 93" at the Spanish Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition "Prints and Drawings of Fakhrulnissa Zeid" (1915-1991) until the 15th of January '94 at Darat al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "Permaeant" Exhibition. (Tel. 643251/2).

★ Christmas bazaar at Al Nukhlah Exhibition Hall, University Road (Tel. 837304, 684257).

★ Christmas bazaar at the Amman International Auto Exhibition (Airport Road).

★ LECTURE
Lecture entitled "Can The United States Lead The World?" by Mr. Ahmad Sharaf at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 6:00 p.m.

The Best Way To Celebrate The Holiday

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Delight yourself with a special open buffet from the Holy Land at the Coffee Shop.

New Year's Eve Andalusia

عشاء راقص
Toast in style and enjoy great live entertainment with Tony Khalassy.

New Year's Eve Grand Ballroom

أسامة جيتور
Celebrate this eve with Osama Jabour & belly dancer Raquel.

New Year's Eve Breakfast Of The Year

أول فطور في السنة
Start 1994 with our wonderful breakfast at the Coffee Shop.

New Year's Eve Dinner Dance

عشاء الأندلسية
Dance all night at the Jordan Ballroom and enjoy live entertainment with Sonya Atia & Tamar.

New Year's Day Brunch Coffee Shop

فطور الكوفي شوب
Enjoy a special "Pick Me Up" brunch with live entertainment by Tony Khalassy.

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Candidates should possess a Masters Degree in Arabic, Education or related field. Additionally, professional training in the instruction of Islamic Studies is required, with experience of curriculum development and practical teaching at a tertiary level including the use of instructional technology. Highly developed leadership skills, ability to manage change and work collaboratively in a multiple cultural team, utilising excellent interpersonal and communication skills will be needed for this challenging post. Fluency in both oral and written Arabic and English are essential requirements as English is the major language of instruction in the Colleges.

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Interested applicants should respond in English enclosing their CV to Janet Grieve, Recruitment Supervisor at the:

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Jordan Times

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Money alone won't do

APART FROM their very small annual increments, civil servants had only two humble pay raises in their salaries in the last five years. Early this year the pay of government employees, the army, the police and retired personnel was raised by JD 15 each. A year or so earlier they got JD 10. But the two hikes covered only a fraction of the spiralling cost of living, which since 1989 has more than doubled due to the forced devaluation of the dinar.

The government employs more than 60 per cent of the workforce and pays on average less than 60 per cent of the wage per person paid by the private sector. Recent studies by both UNICEF and the Ministry of Social Affairs reveal that close to 30 per cent of Jordanians live under the poverty line. Although no studies can prove it, it is thought that many of those who live under the poverty line are employed by the government. This is potentially dangerous. It not only means decreased efficiency through lowered morale, but is politically sensitive. After all the 1989 riots in many towns and villages were triggered by soaring prices.

The government therefore should be keen to solve the problem but careful in handling the situation. On the one hand, it cannot easily raise the funds necessary to improve civil servants' living standards; and, at the same time, it is obliged to adhere to the terms of the economic adjustment programme agreed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which stipulates, among others, a reduction in budget deficit and in public spending.

On the other hand, the government is expected to come under even more pressure from Parliament to find an adequate solution for saving public servants and the service as a whole.

In preparation for its final word to the House on this question the government is talking about "packages," "incentives" and a "new social contract." Whether these terms will be translated into clear policies or not will become clear sooner. For now, however, the factors that are causing this mess must be analysed and understood. The public sector is both overmanned and inefficient. In a way, it is a vicious circle for all. Because the service is overmanned it is responsible for a great deal of waste. And because salaries are extremely low, morale will continue to suffer no matter how many random pay increases are introduced.

What is required then are radical changes. These should include positive engagement by the government in efforts to strengthen the role of the private sector by removing legislation and bureaucratic measures that hinder its work. The government needs to get out of its trader job and leave business ventures to the private sector. Other services that may remain under government control — defence, security, education and health — need to be trimmed, streamlined and made more efficient through training, retraining and employment of modern management techniques.

What is needed is not more specialised studies conducted by new experts and specialists to identify the faults and produce a blueprint for efficient government. We already have done many of those. What is really needed is a renewed will to enforce the necessary change.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON Monday's meeting in Cairo between Israeli and PLO officials, Al Dustour daily said that there are obvious signs that the two parties are determined to implement the Oslo deal. The paper said that despite the good intentions of the Palestinians, there is little chance that the two sides will come to agreement, mainly due to the intransigent behaviour of the Israeli government and the settlers, said the paper. It is due to the Israeli government's failure to respect the Oslo deal and, the aggression of the settlers on Arab people and property that the deal is not implemented, said the paper. The world community is watching any progress in the peace negotiations which started in Oslo, moved to Paris and back to Oslo before moving to Cairo, added the paper. It said that the Arab World is awaiting good results in the talks which it is hoped will witness end to Israel's procrastination and lead to a comprehensive peace.

COMMENTING ON the behaviour of the Jewish settlers in the Arab lands under Israeli rule, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab said the state of the settlers is far stronger than the state of Israel. The settlers whose rule extends from the Golan, in the north, to Gaza, in the south, seem stronger and more aggressive than the Israeli government, said Arafat Hijazi. The writer said that the settlers, who group a large number of criminals, believe in aggression and violence which characterise their acts of violence against the Palestinian land and people. He said that these criminals are defying not only the Arabs but also the Israeli government, making the implementation of the Oslo deal almost impossible. According to reports that leaked from the Israeli defence, the settlers possess more and more sophisticated weapons than the regular forces. The reports said that the settlers are continually training in the use of weapons, which helps them defy the government, the Oslo deal and the views of the world community.

PLO-Israel agreement and prospects for peace

By Dr. Mohamed Rabie

The Israeli-Palestinian agreement of Sept. 13, 1993, identifies the road to a true and lasting peace in the Middle East, yet it is a road littered with obstacles and full of dangerous traps. Most ordinary Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip support the agreement and expect it to free them from Israeli occupation, poverty and deprivation. Most Palestinian intellectuals, on the other hand, continue to criticise the accord and doubt its motives and ability to deliver what is being promised by the PLO leadership.

The agreement is neither a political settlement nor a mere declaration of principles. Rather, it is a declaration of intent, an Israeli-Palestinian mutual commitment to seek and establish peace through a political process. In addition, the agreement calls for taking certain steps on the road to peace. It calls for the establishment of a "Palestinian interim self-government authority, the elected council, for the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip." It also states that "the interim arrangements are in integral part of the whole peace process and that the negotiations on the permanent status will lead to the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 and 338." However, the agreement states that "jurisdiction of the council will cover West Bank and Gaza territory, except Jerusalem, settlements, military locations, Israelis." Issues that were left for final status negotiations which are to commence not later than the beginning of the third year of the interim period are "Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements, borders, relations and cooperation with other neighbours."

The agreement falls short of addressing the legitimate Palestinian demands for sovereignty and self-determination. It even fails to recognise the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as occupied territories, commit Israel to ending its occupation, or acknowledge Palestinian national rights. In addition, it fails to deal with the most sensitive issues of Jerusalem, Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, the fate and rights of Palestinian refugees, Palestinian borders, security and other important issues. And despite being called a Declaration of Principles, the agreement contains no recognised or binding principles to facilitate and guide further negotiation.

Viewed from another angle, the agreement's vagueness appears as a blessing because it did not preclude other options regarding the Palestinian future. PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas, who signed the agreement on Sept. 13 in the White House, said recently that the agreement carries in its belly the possibility of a Palestinian state as well as the probability of perpetuating Israeli occupation. Recognition of this fact has made most Palestinians feel hopeful and apprehensive at the same time. They are hopeful that the agreement will end decades of war and bring peace, yet they do not understand its provisions, are suspicious of its intentions and fear its possible implications on their lives.

Consequently, the momentum generated by the signing of the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles cannot be sustained unless further steps are taken and concrete progress is made. In fact, by the end of 1993, public opinion on both sides of the conflict has become more inclined to oppose rather than support the Sept. 13th agreement.

Israeli journalist Dani Rubinstein wrote in Haaretz in late October 1993 that "indicators of public opinion in the West Bank and Gaza show that a great majority support the accord. However, this majority has responded to calls for strikes against the accord. The same majority continued to offer support and refuge to the wanted activists. This means that the Palestinian public opinion remains volatile and largely undecided. It is thus up to the parties to provide the incentives, the channels, the forums and the rationalisation to transform Palestinian hesitancy and confusion into solid support for peace and peaceful coexistence."

Palestinian forces opposing the agreement are disorganised and demoralised; they lack credible options to offer their constituency. Such an opposition, however, could become strong and focused if the agreement fails to deliver what is being promised or if the wider

peace process fails to make concrete progress on the other tracks, particularly the Israeli-Syrian one. If no agreement with Syria is reached soon and the current slow Palestinian pace and approach to institution-building and democracy continues, the opposition will be revitalised and energised, undermining the agreement and its potential for peace.

If the Palestinian self-rule experiment fails due to Israeli intransigence, PLO incompetence or both, the agreement will become a scapegoat, its shortcomings a rallying point, leading to wide popular dissatisfaction and possibly renewed violence. The agreement will have served no noble purpose: the time and money invested in it will have been wasted and peace, stability and hope will again become a casualty.

Israel seems to view Palestinian self-rule embodied in the agreement as an experiment to be limited and controlled. Most Palestinians, in contrast, tend to view self-rule and Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho as the dawn of a new era leading to independence and statehood. Such differing views threaten the integrity of the agreement and undermine the credibility of all involved parties. For example, the dispute over the definition of the Jericho area makes no sense when viewed from a wider, futuristic perspective. It gives the wrong signal and demonstrates Israeli bad faith. Such an Israeli attitude undermines mutual confidence and weakens Palestinian support for the agreement, while providing the rejectionist forces with added ammunition to fight it.

Therefore, it is in the interest of all parties concerned to ensure the implementation of the agreement and provide the financial resources, the technical assistance and political backing needed for its success. Israeli cooperation in this regard is critical. Although it is too early to pass judgement, the pace of negotiations and institution building and the attitudes of Israeli and PLO officials are not encouraging. To facilitate progress and enhance the prospects of regional peace, it is suggested that change be made in several areas, including the following:

1. The Israeli government cannot hope to have peace and security while Palestinian rights are violated, Palestinian activists are harassed and thousands of Palestinian prisoners continue to languish in Israeli prisons and detention camps. Jewish settlers moreover, cannot be allowed to continue roaming the occupied territories as armed gangs intent on disrupting Palestinian life, terrorising children and killing whoever dares to stand in their way. A more realistic Israeli policy that recognises and respects Palestinian political and human rights is needed. In addition, a more liberal interpretation of the Sept. 13 accord taking the future, not the past, into consideration is also needed. Without such changes, the PLO and the proposed Palestinian council for self-rule will have no credibility, and popular support for the agreement will erode, paving the way for renewed violence.

2. The pace of the peace process regarding the Syrian track needs to be accelerated. While no serious obstacles seem to prevent resolving the Jordanian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli disputes, no concrete progress regarding both tracks can be made without the conclusion of an agreement to settle the Israeli-Syrian dispute. Israeli tactics to pressure Syria will not work and could be counterproductive. Israeli claims that it is difficult to conclude another agreement before the first one has been digested by the Israeli public is neither truthful nor helpful. Syria, besides being entitled to regaining sovereignty over its occupied Golan Heights is the only credible Arab party that can make life difficult for Palestinians supporting the Sept. 13 accord. It can provide the Palestinian rejectionist forces with the political, logistical and financial backing needed to undermine the agreement. Some 700,000 Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon and Syria could be trained, organised and used to intimidate and possibly "liquidate" PLO leaders and others promoting the agreement.

3. The PLO leadership must declare its commitment to democracy, to ending nepotism and to building credible national institutions and societal

systems that ensure social responsibility and accountability. An honest examination of the process led by the PLO to negotiate, conclude and gain institutional approval of the Sept. 13 agreement would conclude that democratic procedures were violated and legitimate Palestinian institutions were bypassed and no debate was allowed to facilitate popular examination of the agreement and expert evaluation of its political and economic ramifications.

4. The current pace of Palestinian institution building is slow and cannot meet Palestinian needs for state building or satisfy international requirements to receive and manage foreign aid. The PLO needs to move quickly to transform its state of mind from that of a revolution to that of a government of a modern state engaged in nation building and socio-economic transformation. This transformation is essential to facilitating the institutionalisation of democracy, reducing political and financial corruption and creating credible vehicles to receive and effectively utilise foreign aid.

The quick and generous international response to provide the funds needed to implement the agreement and facilitate the rebuilding of a devastated Palestinian economy is a positive sign. However, the level of foreign aid, PLO sensitivity to institutional requirements and the agreement's economic provisions are either inadequate or a cause of concern. The \$2.5 billion pledged by the international community falls short of meeting the minimum needs of the Palestinian people. For example, a comprehensive project to resettle the Palestinian refugees of the Gaza Strip over five years would cost about \$5 billion, double the pledged aid package for the entire population of the occupied Palestinian territories. The cost to resettle all Palestinian refugees, including those living in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, is estimated to be in excess of \$20 billion.

Nevertheless, no level of foreign aid will be sufficient to effect the necessary changes without having adequate institutional infrastructure. Israeli occupation, unlike British and French colonialism in India and Algeria respectively, left no bureaucracy behind to assume state responsibilities. The PLO, despite claims to the contrary, has no such bureaucracy and, left alone, cannot manage the pledged funds and utilise them effectively. And while Palestinian experts are abundant, their inclusion in the transformation process has not been taken seriously by the PLO.

In addition, the economic provisions of the Sept. 13 agreement have generated fear and suspicion among Palestinians and Jordanians alike. They think that those provisions were designed to guarantee continued Palestinian dependence on Israel and, at the same time, to employ the Palestinian economy as a vehicle to facilitate economic Israeli penetration of the large Arab market. Furthermore, the agreement's emphasis on economic ties and lack of concern for political rights has strengthened the Arab reaction to American and Israeli calls for ending the Arab economic boycott of the Jewish state.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has more than once criticised the PLO for not moving faster to implement the agreement. He cannot and should not be allowed to place all the blame on the shoulders of the PLO when adopted Israeli policy has sought to deny the Palestinian people the opportunity to build national institutions, gain a degree of economic independence or develop community leadership. Dealing with the political, economic and institutional needs of the Palestinian people is a duty shared by all parties concerned. To facilitate progress, it is suggested that:

A. The PLO and the Jordanian government move swiftly to integrate their economies and unite their peoples. Such a move would enable the Palestinian self-rule authority to rely on Jordanian institutional infrastructure and gain a degree of economic independence while building its own. An expanded Palestinian economy to include the Jordanian economy would create a larger more dynamic market, while providing a more reliable vehicle for all three parties to reach other Arab markets. Thus, it is in the interest of Israel, Jordan and Palestine to include Jordan in all economic and financial

programmes and create a joint Jordanian-Palestinian political and economic entity.

B. The fears of exiled Palestinians must be addressed, particularly those living in refugee camps in neighbouring Arab states. This may be facilitated by allowing Palestinians living outside Palestine to participate in the creation and management of all national institutions and in taking decisions that affect their future. Palestinian refugees living in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria should be given the opportunity to elect representatives to join those who will be elected in the West Bank and Gaza to form the first Palestinian parliament. Such a political body is needed to form a Palestinian government, supervise the self-rule authority, negotiate final status arrangements with Israel, represent and protect the interests of exiled Palestinians and negotiate their future and the future of the Palestinian state with other Arab and non-Arab neighbours.

C. Palestinian-Americans are an asset never used by the U.S. government because of the stigma attached to them. The U.S., while having the power to influence the process of democratisation and institution building in Palestine, lacks the knowledge and political and cultural sensitivity to deal with the Palestinian people. A high State Department official said during a meeting in late September 1993 that with the exception of the Marshall Plan, every U.S. economic effort to help foreign nations has failed. "We do not seem to understand how to deal with other people and there is no reason to believe that our experience in Palestine will be different," the official said.

The formation of a Palestinian-American council of experts is needed to advise U.S. agencies, help the Palestinian self-rule authority and oversee the allocation of American aid to the Palestinian people. The council's first task would most probably be to commission a study to identify Palestinian institutions to be created and obstacles to implementation. The council would also facilitate the formalisation of long-term U.S.-Palestinian cooperation, while enabling the Palestinian people to benefit from the knowledge of a highly talented and educated segment of the Palestinian-American community. Such a council would ensure a better use of American assistance funds, enhance U.S. credibility, address the issue of political and cultural sensitivity and vastly improve the agreement's chances of success. Reliance on U.S. and international agencies only, or channelling most funds through Israeli companies and Jewish American institutions is self-defeating. It will certainly deepen Palestinian and Jordanian suspicion, creating new obstacles to peace and regional cooperation.

D. A comprehensive programme to build Palestinian institutions of civil society should be launched as soon as possible. While participation of American and European non-governmental organisations is essential, the establishment of a national Palestinian foundation is imperative to sustaining efforts in this regard. Foreign organisations and experts, while having valuable knowledge to share, generally lack the power and credibility to influence decisions, particularly at the local level. The proposed foundation is needed to promote democracy, foster peace and regional cooperation, and fund human and community development programmes and research projects. It should also provide institutional and financial support to young entrepreneurs, small business enterprises and promising scholars, artists and inventors. The funds to establish such a foundation and finance its many activities should come from the Israeli treasury which has been holding nearly \$2 billion of Palestinian money collected from Palestinian workers over the last 27 years. At the time when funds were being collected, the Israeli government claimed that the money will be kept until the future of the territories is decided.

A public opinion survey conducted in October 1993 in the occupied territories revealed that over 70 per cent of the population favours elections to choose the self-rule council. Support for delegating authority to the PLO to choose council members was about 17 per cent only. Less than 4.5 per cent supported a suggestion

that the political factions and known Palestinian personalities make up the proposed council. However, about 65 per cent said that they intend to participate in the election process, while less than 18 per cent said that they will not participate. Meanwhile, only 36 per cent said that they expect the election process to be clean and fair and about 40 per cent doubted that it will be clean. As for those who expect elections to be rigged, the percentage was over 25 per cent. A new survey conducted by the same institute a month later, revealed that support for elections had risen to 75 per cent, while support for granting the PLO authority to appoint council members had declined to 15 per cent. A careful review of these results would conclude that:

- The majority of the Palestinian people are for elections but doubt its utility.
- Popular participation could be increased with education.
- International guarantees for a clean election are paramount.
- Support for factions and known personalities is very low.
- Trust in PLO democratic inclination is weak and declining.

The Palestinian Central Council's discussion of October 1993 showed that PLO support for elections is weak and that the current PLO leadership intends to keep power in its own hands. A suggestion to hand over authority to the proposed self-rule council after its elections was rejected and instead it was decided to add elected members to those of the Palestine National Council which the PLO controls and does not even intend to convene soon.

Since peace is the ultimate guarantor of security, all efforts must be made to make this agreement a gate to true peace. And since no peace could be lasting and mutually beneficial without economic development, democracy, regional cooperation and mutual recognition of political rights, all parties should share the responsibility for instituting democracy, ensuring Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab land, and creating frameworks for bilateral and multilateral cooperation. The U.S., having initiated and sponsored this process must ensure its completion. Conceptualising frameworks and initiating processes alone is not enough. The need today is for involvement in creating mechanisms for implementation, utilising all human and financial resources at hand and pursuing regional peace with courage.

Since 1973 I argued that no Arab war against Israel will be seriously contemplated without Egypt's consent and active participation; and no Arab-Israeli peace will be established without the consent and active participation of the Palestinian people. The Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty of 1979 removed the threat of serious war, the Israeli-Palestinian agreement defines the way to achieve real peace. The first treaty gave Israel peace with Egypt but failed to effect normalisation of Arab-Israeli relations, allowing Israel to continue waging war against the Palestinian people, Lebanon and other Arab states. The new agreement should not be made to give Israel normalisation without giving the rest of the Arabs real peace.

Calls to end the Arab boycott of Israel are calls for normalisation that ignore Arab political sensitivities and needs for peace. No rational person in the Arab World wants the boycott to continue, all leaders and businessmen in particular cannot wait for its termination. Yet all of them fear normalisation without peace because of its potential for undermining the Arab bargaining position and strengthening that of Arab rejectionism and Islamic radicalism. A more realistic approach to peace is one that makes normalisation a component of peace, not a condition for it and makes the ending of Israeli occupation of Arab land a prerequisite for normalisation, not only a possible consequence of its realisation.

Dr. Mohamed Rabie is a former professor of economics and an author. He published 11 books, the latest of which is "Conflict Resolution and the Middle East Peace Process" as well as tens of articles in Arabic, English and German.

Sales tax needed for economic programme

By Dr. Fahed Faneh

As expected, the leaders of the private sector did not waste much time before coming strongly against the draft law of sales tax, trying to kill it. The controversy has to be resolved one way or another within two months.

It is not productive for the Ministry of Finance to engage the private sector activists in a lengthy consultation over the sales tax. Such consultations will go nowhere. The previous government did just that. It led the largest and most extensive discussions in the history of Jordanian taxation laws. It also made unlimited concessions to please the traders and industrialists, to the extent of changing the nature of the law, yet the private sector did not give its consent, and probably will never do.

The present government should not repeat the same experiment, which the previous government went through in vain. The approval by the private sector of the sales tax or, for that matter, any tax, is a hopeless case. The private sector did not yet approve the consumption tax which the sales tax will replace. Businessmen have their reservations on the income tax. This is normal and understandable because the tax, as its very name suggests, is not pleasant. If taxes were left to the free will of the taxpayers, no taxes will be paid.

Hopefully, the priority of the government is its continued existence and the proper financing of its functions. It has no alternative but to impose taxes on those who can afford to pay. It is not necessary to obtain the consent of each and every category of tax payers.

The principle which should be observed in this respect is that of "no taxation without representation." The representation of the overall interest of the people is vested in the Parliament, not in the Chamber of Commerce and Chamber of Industry which are, by definition, special interest groups, having the right to function as lobbies but not to claim representing the public interest at large. The government definitely needs the approval of the deputies but not the approval of traders and industrialists.

We should not forget at this juncture, that the sales tax is not a new tax; it is merely a reform and upgrading of a present tax, the consumption tax. The consumer, not the traders or industrialists, will be the final payer of the tax. Therefore, the strong objections of those two groups, ostensibly on behalf of the limited-income groups of citizens, are not more than putting obstacles against the implementation of the government financial schemes.

As far as the overall tax burden or level of prices, the transition from consumption tax to sales tax will not cause an upheaval. The proceeds which will accrue to the treasury will be substantially the same and the economic impact will be almost neutral. The new budget estimated the proceeds of sales tax in 1994 to be only 7 per cent above the proceeds of consumption tax in 1993, a moderate increase that can be achieved through the normal growth of the economy and the moderate rise in the prices of products.

However, we should not ignore the following three crucial facts: first that the sales tax is an integral part of the economic adjustment programme agreed upon with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), second that sales tax laws are in force in 85 countries of the world and third that the last deadline for its adaptation is February 1994. The law should not therefore be evaluated solely on its own merits and urgency, but also on whether we want to keep the programme alive or risk its cancellation which will follow and their impact on the economic, financial and monetary security of the country.

Those who raise their voices against the sales tax law should be made responsible for the inevitable results of the failure to get it through. The private sector will be the first casualty if the law, and consequently the adjustment, were killed and Jordan plunged into economic crisis.

Features

ICCPR's provisions could benefit Palestinians

By Waleed Sadi

Israel's belated ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) went by unnoticed not only by the Palestinians and other Arab countries but also by the Israelis themselves. It took the Israeli establishment more than fifteen years to come around to becoming a state party to the covenant, even though its coming to force in 1977 was the hallmark of the western civilisation with which the Israeli people often associate themselves.

After all, the various Israeli governments have always prided themselves with being part of the democratic world and often boasted that their state is the only democracy in a sea of darkness and dictatorship!

So why did Israel take so much time to become an integral part of the club where it always claimed membership? What is worse, why has Israel kept its ratification of the ICCPR such a well-guarded secret that even its own people, including high officials, did not know about? And when it was adopted, the decision to do so was done quietly and discretely.

The reason or reasons why Israel had put off the inevitable ratification of the covenant are plentiful and can be found in its policies, practices and legislations. That Israel laws are discriminatory on the basis of religion and ethnic origin is something well documented and readily conceded by the concerned Israeli authorities. The "Right of Return" law, to cite just one example, gives Jews from any corner of the world a privileged status as far as immigration and citizenship rights are concerned over all others, including the indigenous people of Palestine. This classic example of discrimination runs counter to the most basic norms of the ICCPR and could be struck down as illegal in its basis.

Human Rights File

As for the Arab Israelis, the list of discriminations against them must be a mile long. We cannot begin to chronicle the situations where the non-Jewish citizens of Israel are not treated equal to the Jewish people. Employment, access to civil service, military service, economic opportunities, etc., are all but few examples where Israeli Jews are accorded a superior status. Yet, this is only one side of the coin.

The Palestinian people under occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip could have gained a lot from the Israeli treaty obligations under the ICCPR, had they known of the fact and appreciated its implications. It so happens that when a state becomes a state party to the covenant, it is bound to adopt policies and measures, both legislative and administrative that are necessary in order to comply with the terms and provisions of that convention not only vis-a-vis its own people but also as far as any territory that it controls. In order for Israel to be true to its treaty obligation under the covenant, it must accord the Palestinian people under its control the full benefits of the treaty provisions. First and foremost, Israel is treaty-obligated to accord the Palestinian the right to self-determination. Ironically, the PLO has neglected to invoke this treaty in its negotiations with Israel for peace in the area.

At a time when the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and the relevant U.N. resolutions are continuously invoked to bolster the Palestinian demands for liberty and independence, the ICCPR does not appear to figure at all in this endeavour. What is most unfortunate about this grave omission is the fact that the ICCPR could be even more potent and effective for securing for the Palestinians their inalienable rights, especially the right of self-determination which is admittedly the core of all rights when it comes to peoples lacking freedom and independence.

The first order for business as far as the Palestinians are concerned is to acquaint themselves with the legal principles of the ICCPR and then document where Israel is in violation of these legally binding guidelines. This applies to Palestinians in the occupied territories as well as to the Palestinians who acquired the Israeli citizenship.

Crown Prince rejects talk of Jordanian-Palestinian 'rift'

(Continued from page 1)

met, that we do not believe in the projects that make the rich richer and the poor poorer. We believe in the content that glorifies and honours the human content. Without honouring human beings there will be no peace and no stability in the Middle East.

"Concerning national rights, when we talk about borders, we in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan view that stepped up efforts should be exerted to solve border issues in the north and the south.

"I think the form of Arab meetings with the American leadership recently was serving the prevailing impression in the region that these declared and televised meetings serve only the image of absent coordination. In the future when we look at the picture of the Washington or Geneva meetings we will ask, as inhabitants of this region and as people suffering from occupation and shouldering the burdens of all sentimental slogans calling for a solution, questions about the tangible dimensions, the moral dimension, the cultural dimension and the religious dimension. I do not think that a Jordan-American summit or a Syrian-American summit will take the Arab citizen away from such questions. On the contrary, it will add a new question, 'will all these meetings serve the cause of peace?'

"When we look at Jordanian-Syrian coordination and when we look at the Arab countries neighbouring Israel and the continued meetings and when we look at the American will to talk with the parties I think we see the U.S. realises that a comprehensive coordination among the Arab parties is an essential element to avoid the idea of having a Jordanian choice, a Syrian choice or a Palestinian choice. The only choice is a comprehensive peace and I believe that these meetings fall within this context."

"Jordan is a host of three waves of refugees — displaced persons, expellees and stateless people. We might say that 31 per cent of the total number of the Palestinian people live in Jordan, compared to 43 per cent living in historical Palestine. When we talk about immigration and the Middle East region we talk about the responsibilities of all of the region's states, whether they are bordering Israel or not. We talk about Egypt, Iraq, Sudan and Yemen. We talk about countries that have a main role in hosting large numbers of refugees and displaced persons. The solution is on the Palestinian side. There is the solution and it lies in practising the right of repatriation or return. I think the important thing here is to remember that the steps towards a comprehensive solution always remind us that the story of Jordan and Palestine today is not the issue. The issue today is how to discuss the issue of the right to return or be repatriated and solving the problem of Palestinians wherever they are in an acceptable way that gives it its civil, economic and social rights in a fair manner in the Middle East region."

The Crown Prince was asked:

After the signing of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement in September in Washington there was some confusion on the Jordanian arena and there was some talk about 'who is Jordanian' and the return of citizens of Palestinian origin to their country. These were reflected in a clear manner on the economic situation. The question is 'are there any definite Jordanian procedures that you will take in this regard?'

The Crown Prince replied: "I think this question is loaded and when I say loaded this means there are two elements in your question. The first part asks about the Jordanian and Palestinian identity. This question in Jordan might be made by the imagination of those who think that there is a rift, God forbid, in the fabrics of this society. 'We believe in the national unity in words and deeds. We also at the same time believe in pluralism and respect for other views and devoting belonging through clearly

defining 'identity' at the Islamic, regional level and naturally through discussing how is Jordanian? I wonder at those asking about the third and fourth grand-father's birthplace and how we talk about a Great Arab Revolt in Jordan and talk about renaissance movements."

"It is really unreasonable that the Kingdom's founder Abdullah, may God's mercy be upon him, who received the refugees in 1948 that his grandsons, God forbid, to... His Majesty always stresses national unity between citizens regardless of their origins; it is irrational that we contradict ourselves and the historical message, while our history says that we enhance this identity in words and deeds combined."

On a question on a future Jordanian-Palestinian confederation, the Crown Prince said:

"Confederation with whom? When Jordan's proposal on the form of the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship in 1972 was presented it was not accepted by our Arab brethren and they refused to look at the details of this proposal."

"The Israeli side also may be in 1972 was thinking that Jordanian touches were still tangible in the occupied territories and maybe was comfortable with ruling out the idea of confederation in 1972 and in 1974 that was a stand supporting an independent Palestinian identity and backing the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. An in 1988 there was Jordan's decision to sever its legal and administrative ties with the West Bank."

"I would like to ask about the issue of shifting from the practical role in supporting the Palestinian identity in trade and education from Jordanian to Palestinian sovereignty, by God's will, and I wonder about the way to complete these stages and about confederation... But it is impossible to talk about structural relationship unless we develop the practical relationship from the base to the top."

Asked whether there was a coolness in Jordanian-Palestinian rela-

tions, with reference that the recent visit paid by Yasser Arafat did not produce positive results at the level of developing the work of the joint committees or signing the economic cooperation agreement, the Crown Prince said:

"We cannot judge this relationship by using such vocabulary and it is enough to say that the Palestinian side is naturally burdened by heavy international responsibilities, keeping in touch with various governments in this world to outline the signs of progress and responsibilities in formulating a concept of Palestinian administration with its various aspects."

"So we wait and expect a positive answer on transferring the committees that were formed between the Jordanians and the Palestinians to a new monument of agreeing on several issues regarding the commercial relationship."

"I like to emphasise that opening the branches of Jordanian banks have nothing to do with the talks of the past few months. There was a Palestinian request in 1986 to open branches of Jordanian banks in the occupied territories and that is under study now. But my main question is that if we continued in reality not to coordinate stands in the quantity and quality as required by the Jordanian and the Arab vision neighbouring occupied Palestine... and who will win the round...?"

On possible regional economic cooperation, including Israel, he said:

"I believe that the political framework is the main issue in everything as I have expressed in many occasions before. We do not believe in projects that make the rich richer and the poor poorer. We believe in the political, legal framework that respects the countries' national sovereignty and that these countries practise their sovereignty in all fields. But when we talk about the region's clear market, allow me to remind you to the Arab boycott of Israel as an example because there should be a substitute. We really do not want

to have voices rising in this world calling for ending the boycott within the framework of removing the unfriendly phrases about Israel in the United Nations' resolutions. It is inevitable to remind you that Greece, Spain and Portugal were countries that joined the European agreement on tariffs and have been receiving huge financial incentives. So it was not difficult for them to join that agreement."

"I talk about Israel's entering the region's market in stages over years through a full understanding of the great existing gaps and the need to contain and address them in a clear way that would not leave the Arab citizen with the impression that the economy of the \$50 or \$60 billion is invading and dominating. We naturally do not seek an economic solution to economic problems but seek a political and legal framework and we look for the means to develop this region as the other regions of the world."

On the West's perception of Islam, the Crown Prince said:

"As a Hashemite, I cannot but belong to Islam as a dogma and a faith. When we talk about Islamic radicalism I believe we are wrong when we accept such vocabulary. In defending the image of Muslims in the world I think I am extremist. I address the world as I did in the United Nations, in my defence of the image of Islam as we know and as we live in the Islamic Nation. But allow me to mention the reason of extremism and focus on the policies of despair and the economies of despair. In particular, I remember when we were demanding the establishment of an international alms fund..."

On possibilities of better Arab relations and the UAE's call for Arab reconciliation, the Crown Prince said:

"Naturally we received this call with full appreciation and admiration, and we admire statements by Sheikh Zayed and some UAE officials who made us feel the certain desire to mend fences. I can talk about my interest in the Arab Thought Forum and the call to having understanding between us

before having to reach agreement..."

The Crown Prince, in an interview published Sunday, described an Oct. 1 meeting to Washington with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres as a painful and bitter moment.

In an interview with Beirut's Al Safir daily, Prince Hassan said the Gulf crisis sparked by the Aug. 2, 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait had split the Arab World and encouraged others to make demands on Arabs.

"My feeling when I met with Peres was similar to that of a freedom fighter who was going to a deadly operation," he told Al Safir. "I was the commando who volunteered for the operation and felt that I was going to that meeting under a summons."

"It was a painful and bitter

moment, and I felt sorry for the whole Arab Nation. We were not in excellent shape before the Gulf crisis, but we have fallen to the bottom now," he said in interview.

Prince Hassan stressed the importance of achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region and said it will be difficult to achieve peace without involving Iran and Iraq.

Prince Hassan said if extremism and terrorism were to be contained, then it was a must that all people in this region should feel secure and enjoy peace. Jordan's relations with Syria, Prince Hassan said, were unique and that the leaderships of the two countries have dismissed the myth of "Jordanian and Syrian options."

He noted that contacts and consultations with President Hafez Al Assad were continuing.

Hamas offers conditional truce

(Continued from page 1)

side will respond, the armed side from the Palestinian side will stop all the manifestations," he said.

Israeli Chief-of-Staff Ehud Barak was quoted by the Israeli daily Maariv on Sunday as saying Hamas' proposal was not serious.

Hamas has stepped up attacks on Israeli targets since the Israel-PLO agreement was signed in Washington.

Also Sunday, an Israeli-Arab legislator urged Israel to release Hamas' jailed spiritual leader Ahmad Yassin, saying this could further mollify Hamas' opposition to the peace talks.

"When this man is released, there may be someone in the field you can negotiate with," Taleh Al Sana of the Arab Democratic Party told Israel Radio. He reportedly met Sheikh Yassin over the

weekend in the Ramle prison hospital.

Sheikh Yassin, 58, in frail health and confined to a wheelchair, is serving a life term for ordering killings of Israeli soldiers and Arab informers during the Palestinian uprising.

The Jerusalem-based Palestinian daily Al Nahar reported that Israel had offered to free Sheikh Yassin in exchange for a cease-fire with Hamas. Hamas refused the offer, the newspaper said.

Soldiers, meanwhile, prevented about 25 Israeli militants of the anti-Arab Kach movement from entering Gaza City where they had challenged Hamas to a street battle, Israeli reports said.

Some reportedly got into a fist fight at the Erez crossing into Gaza with Israeli peace crusader Abie Nathan, who encountered them while leaving Gaza after meeting Hamas activists.

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- Address
- Phone number(s)
- Age
- Education
- Employment
- Experience in this type of education and training
- Name, address and phone number of three different employment referees
- Position(s) you are applying for
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Jerusalem in draft law

(Continued from page 1)

IAF deputy Ahmad Kassasheh said that the West Bank, including Jerusalem, is still part of the Kingdom and the decision to sever ties is "unconstitutional."

"The sovereignty over Jerusalem is Arab and Hashemite," Deputy Abdul Karim Kabariti said, agreeing with the viewpoint of the Islamists that the law should retain the mention of a court of appeal in Jerusalem.

Rapporteur of the Judiciary Committee Abdul Karim Al Dughmi disagreed with the proposal, reminding deputies of the changes that have occurred since Jordan cut ties with the West Bank in 1988.

"We were elected under a law that cancelled parliamentary seats allocated for the West Bank," he said.

Deputy Samir Habashneh pointed out that Israel does not recognise Jerusalem as part of the West Bank and "a Jordanian withdrawal from it would lead to a vacuum."

He said that the Jordanian leadership differentiates between the situation of Jerusalem and that of the rest of the occupied territories on the grounds that Jerusalem is a Muslim Arab issue.

The president of the Judiciary Committee, Abdul Baqi Jammo, indicated that the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) would object to the inclusion of Jerusalem in a Jordanian law and reminded deputies that the Kingdom was "forced" by the PLO and Arab countries to give up its representation of the Palestinians in 1974.

Mr. Jammo said Jordan disengaged from the West Bank to help the Palestinians who requested it to do so.

Despite the lengthy debate on the issue, a strong majority of the House voted in favour of the IAF proposal before the House approved the law in its otherwise entirety.

Minister of Justice Taher Hikmat said the government was preparing a new law on the establishment of the courts of appeals and noted that it is constitutionally required to present Parliament with the

draft law. He did not say when the new law would be finished.

The House also approved a draft law for the pension of military officers and referred to its Judiciary Committee a proposal for drafting new internal regulation of the House.

The dearth of legal experts in the House was manifested Sunday as deputies kept going backward to items that they had already approved after legal and constitutional points were raised. Only four of the 80 deputies have legal training.

The deputies will hold their next meeting Wednesday when they will have "a general discussion" with the government on the peace process. It is not yet clear whether the session will be open or secret.

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Item	Price
Chicken Burger	1.500
Beef Burger	1.500
Vegetarian Burger	1.500
French Fries	1.000
Soft Drink	0.500
Ice Cream	0.500
Chocolate Cake	0.500
Apple Pie	0.500
Chocolate Brownie	0.500
Vanilla Ice Cream	0.500
Chocolate Ice Cream	0.500
Vanilla Soft Drink	0.500
Chocolate Soft Drink	0.500
Vanilla Lemonade	0.500
Chocolate Lemonade	0.500
Vanilla Tea	0.500
Chocolate Tea	0.500
Vanilla Coffee	0.500
Chocolate Coffee	0.500
Vanilla Hot Chocolate	0.500
Chocolate Hot Chocolate	0.500
Vanilla Smoothie	0.500
Chocolate Smoothie	0.500
Vanilla Juice	0.500
Chocolate Juice	0.500
Vanilla Water	0.500
Chocolate Water	0.500
Vanilla Soda	0.500
Chocolate Soda	0.500
Vanilla Syrup	0.500
Chocolate Syrup	0.500
Vanilla Cream	0.500
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Vanilla Oil	0.500
Chocolate Oil	0.500
Vanilla Salt	0.500
Chocolate Salt	0.500
Vanilla Pepper	0.500
Chocolate Pepper	0.500
Vanilla Sugar	0.500
Chocolate Sugar	0.500
Vanilla Honey	0.500
Chocolate Honey	0.500
Vanilla Maple	0.500
Chocolate Maple	0.500
Vanilla Vanilla	0.500
Chocolate Vanilla	0.500
Vanilla Caramel	0.500
Chocolate Caramel	0.500
Vanilla Fudge	0.500
Chocolate Fudge	0.500
Vanilla Mocha	0.500
Chocolate Mocha	0.500
Vanilla Latte	0.500
Chocolate Latte	0.500
Vanilla Cappuccino	0.500
Chocolate Cappuccino	0.500
Vanilla Americano	0.500
Chocolate Americano	0.500
Vanilla Espresso	0.500
Chocolate Espresso	0.500
Vanilla Drip Coffee	0.500
Chocolate Drip Coffee	0.500
Vanilla French Press	0.500
Chocolate French Press	0.500
Vanilla Cold Brew	0.500
Chocolate Cold Brew	0.500
Vanilla Iced Coffee	0.500
Chocolate Iced Coffee	0.500
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Vanilla Iced Caramel	0.500
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Vanilla Iced Iced Oil	0.500
Chocolate Iced Iced Oil	0.500
Vanilla Iced Iced Salt	0.500
Chocolate Iced Iced Salt	0.500
Vanilla Iced Iced Pepper	0.500
Chocolate Iced Iced Pepper	0.500
Vanilla Iced Iced Sugar	0.500
Chocolate Iced Iced Sugar	0.5

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Time chooses Arafat, Rabin, Mandela and De Klerk as Men of the Year

NEW YORK (AP) — For their "common genius" as peacemakers, Time magazine picked Yitzhak Rabin, Yasser Arafat, Nelson Mandela and F.W. De Klerk as its "Men of the Year" for 1993.

The four were chosen because they "reasserted the principle that leaders matter: That an individual's vision, courageously and persuasively and intelligently pursued, can override the rather unimaginative human preference for war," the magazine said in a statement.

The four leaders are displayed on the cover of Time's Jan. 5 issue, which goes on sale Monday.

"Without Rabin and Arafat, the Israelis and Palestinians would have continued down the same bleak, violent road they have followed since 1948," Time said. "Without Mandela and De Klerk, blacks and whites (in South Africa) would have descended into the bloodiest race war in history."

The magazine noted that the peacemakers deal in the Middle East and the one in South Africa are still works in progress.

"Extremists on all sides threaten to destroy the arrangements, which look at times like fragile shelters being nailed together in a high wind," Time said.

Mr. De Klerk, president of South Africa, and Mr. Mandela, leader of the African National Congress, were joint winners of the Nobel Peace Prize. Mr. Rabin is prime minister of Israel and Mr. Arafat is leader of the Palestine

Liberation Organisation (PLO).

"In 1993, Rabin and Arafat; Mandela and De Klerk all rose to the occasion before them. Their common genius was that they saw in the convergence of circumstances a ripeness of moment — and that they acted," the magazine said.

In separate interviews, each of the winners spoke to Time on their efforts to achieve peace.

"The intifada (the Palestinian uprising) motivated the Israelis," Mr. Arafat said. "There were no signs it would end anytime soon. There was no military solution. This super army was running after kids and fighting against women."

Mr. Rabin conceded that the uprising "created problem" for Israel.

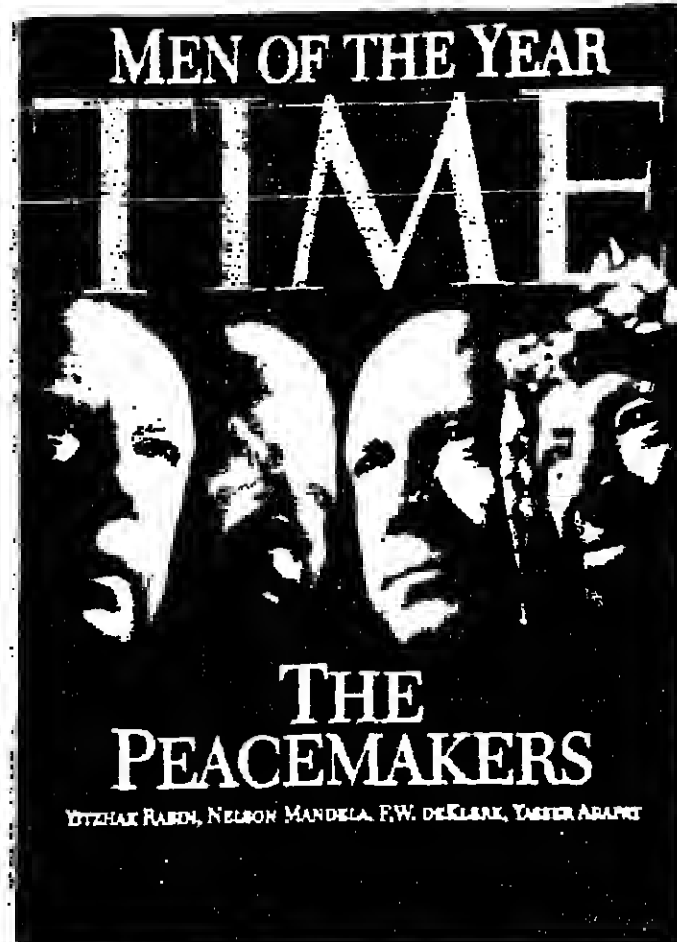
"I didn't believe the present situation could last without an increase in extremism among the Palestinians," he said. "I believed that we have a window of just a few years to try to face this threat."

Mr. Rabin was concerned that Mr. Arafat's PLO did not have any experience in running a large community, but Mr. Arafat was confident.

"The PLO is more than just an organisation. We are responsible for the whole life of our people," he said.

In an unusual turn, Mr. Mandela praised Mr. De Klerk.

"In spite of my criticism, it must be acknowledged he has made a very important contribution to the transformation of an apartheid state into a non-racial society," Mr. De Klerk said it was the



Time's Jan. 5 issue shows a combo on its cover of (left to right) Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, African Congress leader Nelson Mandela, South African President F.W. De Klerk and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, who have been named Men of the Year (AFP photo)

time for peace. "I don't believe that I am irreplaceable. I don't believe that he (Mandela) is irreplaceable," Mr. De Klerk said. "That fact is, we were around

and we were the leaders." Time's first "Man of the Year" was aviator Charles Lindbergh, chosen in 1927. President Bill Clinton was chosen last year.

Bosnia truce grips after carnage

SARAJEVO (R) — A truce in Bosnia's civil war appeared to grip, however temporarily, on Sunday after Christmas Day fighting caused carnage and political rivals accused each other of prolonging the conflict.

Sarajevo, besieged by Serbs and hit by almost 700 shells Saturday, was quiet but had no electricity or water.

Fighting elsewhere was reported sporadic, including in central Bosnia where Bosnian Croat HVO forces claimed to have halted a Muslim offensive.

The truce, due to last until Jan. 15, was sealed by political leaders of the three sides at peace talks Thursday.

But Sarajevo Radio said Muslims suffered 30 dead and 78 wounded in fighting in Bosnia Friday and Saturday.

Bosnian Croats reported 30 of their soldiers and civilians killed in central Bosnia and said the Muslim-led Bosnian army was regrouping in preparation for fresh attacks.

Ceasefires have never lasted long during the 21-month war that erupted when Bosnian Serbs attacked Muslims and Croats who declared Bosnian independence from Serb-dominated Yugoslavia.

Although Bosnia's Muslims and Croats — themselves now battlefield foes — are a majority of the population, Serbs claim and control most of its territory as an ancestral possession.

With the current ceasefire in the balance, Bosnian and Serbian leaders traded accusations of responsibility for the violations.

Serbian Foreign Minister Vukobratovic said in a radio interview the peace process, brokered by the United Nations and the European Community, had been put in jeopardy by the Bosnian gov-

ernment's determination to continue fighting.

Irfan Ljubijankic, the Bosnian foreign minister, blamed Serbs and Croats, telling a Sarajevo Radio interviewer: "I don't have the impression there is a real willingness to carry out the ceasefire."

He criticised apparent EC lack of will to force the Serbs to allow the airport to reopen in the northeastern-Muslim stronghold of Tuzla.

Access to the airport, which is within range of Serb artillery, would improve the supply of aid to the 2.7 million Bosnians of all three nationalities who depend on U.N. relief for their survival.

"We noticed very energetic resistance from the Serb side to this (reopening) and apart from the anger of (EC) foreign ministers I sensed their resignation on this matter," Mr. Ljubijankic said. "I haven't felt an energetic willingness on the part of the EC to impose such a solution."

Bosnian Serbs have flatly ruled out the opening of the airport in case additional supplies of food to the Muslims enhance their ability to fight on and delay a peace settlement. In a further effort to persuade the Bosnian government to negotiate, the Serbs have threatened to withdraw an agreement that Muslims should have at least a third of Bosnia's territory under a plan to carve it into three ethnic states.

The EC's counter threat to Serbs is that sanctions already crippling the economy of rump Yugoslavia will be made harsher if they are inflexible.

Economist Mladjen Dinkic told the Belgrade daily Politika Sunday that inflation in Serbia would reach 569.131 per cent in December and was rising at 1.21 per cent a minute.

On Dec. 21, 1992, one German mark was worth 1,500 dinars. Mr. Dinkic calculated that had the government not cut several zeros off the dinar since, the equivalent a year later would have been 37 trillion dinars to the mark.

Hyperinflation has reduced millions of Serbs to poverty and emptied food shops of affordable staples.

Meanwhile, Muslim nationalists vowed Sunday to intensify support for Bosnian Muslims and said that the only way to peace in former Yugoslavia was to allow Muslims to defend themselves.

A statement issued by the 51-member Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) assured Bosnian Muslims that they had the "support of one billion Muslims of the world, who will stand by them in their hour of trial."

Muslim nations have long voiced anger at what they see as the West's failure to protect their co-religionists in Bosnia. The statement said its members were "determined to intensify their efforts to provide relief and assistance for Bosnia-Herzegovina, to impart a new momentum to their ongoing efforts to help in the defence of the sovereignty, independence and restoration of the territorial integrity of Bosnia-Herzegovina."

It urged the world community and Security Council "to reconsider their policies" on Bosnia and "endeavour to promote a just peace" and reiterated a call to lift the arms embargo for Bosnian Muslims.

"We demand that all international efforts be directed to reviving a viable and defensible state of Bosnia-Herzegovina, without which there would be no peace, no stability nor hope for a just and equitable world order."

Japan 'wants to avoid' early elections

TOKYO (R) — Japan's coalition government will try to avoid calling snap elections despite opposition party roadblocks to policy-making and crucial legislation, Deputy Prime Minister Tsutomu Hata said Sunday.

But Mr. Hata, who is also foreign minister, said the government had not completely ruled out early elections.

"With the economy in a difficult fix, we want to avoid elections at all costs," Mr. Hata, a powerful coalition figure, said in a televised debate.

"We don't completely rule out dissolving parliament (for elections), but at this point we want to avoid such a scenario." Talk of early elections is rife on Nagatacho, Tokyo's parliament hill, as Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa and his fractious eight-group coalition appear unable to agree on tax reform and other measures to stimulate spending and snap the economy out of its worst downturn in two decades.

While the government is poised to cut income taxes, Finance Ministry officials are demanding that the cuts be balanced with a hike in the three per cent sales tax.

But the Socialist Party, the largest in the ruling alliance, objects to raising a sales tax it fought to prevent being imposed in 1989.

Compounding Mr. Hosokawa's problems is lack of progress in his efforts to push through long-promised political reform legislation, which includes overhauling the electoral system and anti-corruption laws.

When he came to power in August, Mr. Hosokawa vowed to get the reform bills passed by year's end or take political responsibility, a remark taken to mean he would resign or call elections.

Last Friday, however, he apologised on national television and promised anew that his government would pass the reform bills into law by late January, when parliament's current extended session is due to end.

Mr. Hosokawa said he had no intention of calling elections regardless of the outcome of the reform legislation.

Mr. Hata, co-leader of the coalition's most influential member, the Japan Renewal Party (JRP), defended the government against charges it was incapable of drafting effective economic policy.

"Overall economic policy should be decided upon in parliament, but the opposition parties are refusing to do (this) in order to create confusion," said Mr. Hata.

Ghali arrives in China after Korea trip

BEIJING (R) — U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali, seeking to defuse a crisis over North Korea's suspected nuclear weapons programme, arrived in China Sunday and quickly went into talks with Chinese Premier Li Peng.

Dr. Ghali did not speak to reporters after flying in from Pyongyang on a special aircraft. He had earlier visited south Korea.

Before leaving the North Korean capital, the U.N. chief said he believed it would be possible to resolve the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula through negotiation and dialogue.

The North's official Korea Central News Agency (KCNA) said.

China's official Xinhua News Agency reported that the meeting between Dr. Ghali and Mr. Peng took place, but it gave no details of their discussions.

Several nations, including the United States, have expressed hope that Beijing would use its influence with its long-time ally Pyongyang to help resolve the nuclear issue. China has said often that talks represented the only way to solve the problem.

The New York Times newspaper reported Sunday that the U.S. Central Intelligence

Agency had told President Bill Clinton that North Korea has probably built one or two nuclear bombs.

The paper, quoting unnamed administration officials, said this finding was disputed by the State Department but supported by all intelligence agencies.

North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung told Dr. Ghali Saturday there were "positive signs" in his country's talks with the United States over allowing inspections of suspected military-related nuclear facilities. But Mr. Kim added that there was no need for United Nations involvement.

The president felt that, given the ongoing nature of the talks and the positive signs currently emanating from them, there was no need for the United Nations to become directly involved at this time.

Both the United Nations and the North's KCNA described the talks between Dr. Ghali and Mr. Kim as "warm and cordial."

Reports from the United States indicated North Korea was moving towards opening all its nuclear sites to international inspection but U.S. officials said many details still had to be worked out.

North Korea has refused to

permit inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency, a U.N. agency, at two sites the United States has said it suspected were being used to process nuclear materials. North Korean and U.N. officials have been in negotiations on the subject for months.

KCNA, monitored in Tokyo, said the U.N. chief expressed belief that the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula could be resolved through negotiation and dialogue. It said Dr. Ghali was speaking to reporters before leaving Pyongyang for Beijing.

KCNA said Dr. Ghali also stressed that the unification of Korea should be realised through talks, negotiation and dialogue. He said he hoped that soon Korea would be represented in the United Nations by one representative.

Saturday's talks with President Kim were held in "a frank and cordial atmosphere," the U.N. chief said. "The international community and the United Nations must find ways to support security, reunification and development for the whole of the Korean peninsula," Dr. Ghali was quoted as saying.

Dr. Ghali will meet Qian Qichen, China's foreign minister and vice-premier, Monday before leaving the country.

Japan's gloomy businessmen keep on drinking

TOKYO (R) — Despite Japan's worst economic slump in two decades, businessmen are not giving up the most important things in life — golf and drinking. From February 1992 to January this year, corporations spent 6.2 trillion yen (\$56 billion) on entertainment, Japan's highest total ever and a one per cent rise on the previous year, according to a government tax agency survey. The figure, which includes spending on golf, presents, restaurants and bars, is equivalent to nearly a tenth of the national budget and a daily national outlay of 17 billion yen (\$150 million). Many white-collar workers are worrying for the first time that they might lose their jobs, as companies struggle to cut costs. Overall corporate revenues slid by 1.4 per cent in the same period according to the survey, the first fall since current accounting methods were introduced in 1976. Analysts quoted by Kyodo News Agency said the rise came because of harsh competition in the current business environment. In Japan, money spent on entertainment is more effective in promoting sales than money on advertising. Biggest spenders for the third successive year were construction companies, in the news recently for a series of scandals involving bribes to local politicians in return for lucrative projects. They spent 8.4 yen on entertainment for every 1,000 yen they earned in revenues, compared with an industry-wide average of 4.1 yen (8.4 cents for every 100 compared with 4.1 cents).

NEWS IN BRIEF

French coastline bans strollers

BORDEAUX, France (R) — Authorities banned strollers from more than 500 kilometres of French Atlantic coastline from southern Brittany to the Spanish coast Sunday after explosive detonators were found south of Bordeaux. Thousands of the devices began washing up on the coasts of Brittany a week ago, apparently part of a cargo of 34,000 detonators spilled by a Cypriot vessel in September. The detonators, designed to blast rocks on construction projects, can be lethal if handled. No one has been hurt so far. The ban is against walking on the water's edge. Strollers are allowed onto beaches but are advised to be cautious. Authorities initially banned strollers from Breton coastlines but progressively issued more bans as detonators began washing up on beaches further south.

Georgian spy HQ bombed

MOSCOW (AFP) — A blazing row between Georgia's defence and security ministry degenerated into a brawl which led to a bomb attack on the country's Intelligence Service Headquarters, a spokesman for President Eduard Shevardnadze said Sunday. News of the scuffle at Tbilisi airport between Defence Minister Georgi Karkarashvili and Security Minister Igor Giorgadze, who had spilled over amid reports that Defence Ministry troops in armed vehicles were deployed Sunday around the parliament building. Mr. Shevardnadze himself was forced to intervene during Friday's brawl to separate the two men. The presidency spokesman told AFP. A day later the bomb blast ripped through Security Ministry Headquarters in the centre of the capital, wounding two guards, one of them seriously. Mr. Shevardnadze Sunday announced the formation of a governmental commission of inquiry led by Prime Minister Otar Patsatsia to investigate both incidents.

Rao pressed to keep finance minister

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao Sunday remained under pressure to reject the resignation of Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, the architect of the country's radical economic liberalisation. Business leaders and members of the ruling Congress (I) Party continued to appeal to Mr. Rao to retain the former World Bank economist in his cabinet in order to pursue sweeping reforms begun two years ago. "The country cannot afford to lose an able and distinguished finance minister," Rajiv Rai, president of the Hindustan Chamber of Commerce, said in a statement in the southern city of Madras. If Mr. Rao permitted the 61-year-old Manmohan Singh to go, it would cause a serious setback to the economic progress of the country, added the Federation of the Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Manmohan Singh resigned from the cabinet quietly Thursday after a parliamentary panel blamed him for a \$1.3 billion banking and securities scam. The resignation, revealed Friday, has not been accepted yet.

Jackson urges end to embargo on Cuba

HAVANA (R) — Civil rights activist Jesse Jackson, on a Christmas visit to Havana, has called for an end to the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba, saying in a rousing church address that Cuban children were suffering because of it. "Together we will work and pray and end the embargo and bring joy to the children," Rev. Jackson told a Christmas evening service in a small Baptist church in Havana, adding he was in Cuba to "work as a bridge builder, to help reunite two great countries." Rev. Jackson said he had been saddened by the knowledge that Cuban children did not have gifts this Christmas. Havana blames the 31-year embargo in part for a severe economic crisis that has caused shortages ranging from fuel and power to food items and basic consumer goods. "Tonight, suffering has been induced in Cuba by an unnecessary embargo long after the cold war is over," said Rev. Jackson, on a five-day trip to the Communist-ruled Caribbean island during which he plans to meet President Fidel Castro, government officials, church leaders and human rights activists.

Indonesia floods kill 13

JAKARTA (R) — Floods caused by torrential rain in Indonesia's West Java set off a landslide in which at least 13 people died and dozens of others were missing feared dead, police said Sunday. "We found 13 people killed in the landslide, and dozens more buried are feared dead," Major Hasan Gunadi said by telephone from Lebak district. Gunadi said the landslide occurred Friday in the foothills of Cisoka village, 80 kilometres west of Jakarta, after days of heavy rains.

Floods kill over 20 in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Seasonal floods triggered by monsoon rains in Malaysia have killed more than 20 people and forced 20,000 people out of their homes, officials said Sunday. Malaysia's northeastern state of Kelantan, where most rivers had breached, danger levels, was the worst hit with at least 11 people killed and more than 14,000 evacuated, they said. "This is the worst flood in three years," Information Minister Mohammad Rahmat said, as the Meteorological Services Department predicted late Sunday that heavy rains would continue to pour over the peninsula at least until Tuesday.

Dutch clean up as floodwaters retreat

AMSTERDAM (R) — Floodwaters which drove thousands of Dutch people from their homes over Christmas were in retreat Sunday, allowing clean-up operations to begin.

More than 12,000 residents were evacuated in the southern province of Limburg and more than 460 square kilometres remained under water after the worst flooding in decades.

There were no official damage estimates, but a spokesman for Internal Affairs Ministry said the bill could easily hit 100 million guilders (\$53 million).

Floodwaters from the mighty Rhine surging northward along the River IJssel in the northeast of the country still threatened surrounding countryside, but emergency teams said dykes were high enough and seemed likely to hold.

The swollen Rhine, which has created havoc in parts of Germany, is among the rivers that flow into the delta region which forms the southeastern Netherlands on the North Sea. "There is no actual danger of flooding. We expect the water to reach Deventer shortly and be here by midnight, but we know all the critical points and there is no danger," said Henriette Logman at the emergency centre in the northern town of Zwolle.

Both towns stand on the banks of the IJssel, but she said in Deventer the water would crest at

25 centimetres below the town's lowest dyke and in Zwolle the defences were more than 50 centimetres above the expected high water mark.

To the south in Limburg province some evacuated residents were told they could go home as emergency services began to mop up and started urgent repair work on damaged dykes.

Officials worried that the region's intricate water defences could have been dangerously weakened after days under water.

The Dutch government has declared the floods a national disaster and charities launched a joint appeal to raise cash for the victims, who face a ruinous Christmas as insurance cover for flooding is almost impossible to get in the Dutch lowlands.

Meanwhile, thousands of Germans began cleaning up Sunday after the worst river flooding in over 60 years swamped riverside cities and homes and forced many to spend Christmas in army barracks or hotels.

At least five people died in storm havoc as gale-whipped floods surged through low-lying areas.

The Rhine River, which burst its banks after torrential rain and flooded scores of German homes, was receding rapidly along its length from Koblenz to the Dutch border.

In Bonn, disaster centre officials said the Rhine had stood at 9.12 metres late Saturday evening, compared with 9.53 metres at midmorning Saturday.

Cicciolina says husband kidnapped child

ROME (R) — Porn star and former Italian member of parliament La Cicciolina alleged that her estranged American sculptor husband Jeff Koons had kidnapped their child, actress Ilona Staller, better known by her stage name La Cicciolina (small cuddly one), said Mr. Koons took 13-month-old Maximilian Ludwig late Thursday. Police confirmed that Ms. Staller had a complaint against Mr. Koons and said a search had been mounted for the sculptor and the child. Ms. Staller said she was seeking the help of Interpol and U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation to find Mr. Koons, whose sexually explicit sculptures sell for thousands of dollars. "He has kidnapped my baby," said Ms. Staller, a member of Italy's Chamber of Deputies on the Republican ticket until 1992. Ms. Staller said she suspected the child had been taken to New York, where she used to live with Mr. Koons, or Florida. "I still have our child's passport, so he must have been taken out of Italy illegally," she told Reuters. Ms. Staller said Mr. Koons, who had obtained a court order granting him access to the child, had taken him out Thursday but failed to bring him back. The order forbade Mr. Koons from leaving Italy with their son. "I started looking for them and found he had checked out of the hotel," Ms. Staller said. She said police were asking an assistant of Mr. Koons, William Gary McCraw, who had arrived at the hotel to settle the bill, about Mr. Koons' whereabouts.

Man pays for stolen Christmas tree...20 years later

WICHITA, Kan. (AP) — It took 20 years, but a man who stole a Christmas tree from a city golf course finally paid for it. "It was something that had been chewing on him," said Stan Shaver, the golf pro at Pawnee Prairie Municipal Golf Course. "He finally told his wife, and she told him, 'go make restitution.'" A man called the pro shop and said he had been broke 20 years ago when he snuck onto the course and chopped down a tree. "I told him, 'I couldn't give you a figure on it, it's 29 years ago. I'd just say forget about the tree and send me \$20,'" Shaver said. "He said, 'that sounds fine.'" About an hour later, a man walked into the pro shop, admitted he had stolen the tree and a garden hose and left \$40. The man who didn't give his name shook hands with Shaver and left. "It's kind of hard to face up to when you do something like that," Shaver said. "I thought it was really something."

Chinese president hails Deng in homage to Mao's 100th anniversary

BEIJING (AFP) — Chinese President Jiang Zemin paid homage Sunday to Mao Zedong in an impassioned speech at a ceremony commemorating the 100th anniversary of the birth of the founder of Communist China.

But he also used the occasion to burnish the image of supreme leader Deng Xiaoping as the natural successor of Mao, and to stress the importance of the market economy — anathema to the late "great helmsman."

Mao's mausoleum. "He is the pride of the Communist Party, of the Chinese nation," said Mr. Jiang, secretary-general of the Communist Party, wearing a dark gray Mao suit, during an hour-long speech to the ceremony presided over by Prime Minister Li Peng.

Even Mr. Jiang's hair was swept back in tribute to the style of the late Chairman, whose portrait was hanging behind the official speaker's platform in the hall.

All the senior leaders attended the ceremony, with the notable exception of Mr. Deng, 89, who is in poor health.

Former President Yang Shangkun, 86, entered the hall fourth in line behind Mr. Jiang, Mr. Li and Qiao Shi, the president of the National Peo-

ple's Congress. Mr. Yang, a long-time Deng ally, who lost power in 1992, left the ceremony after only half an hour.

"Comrade Mao Zedong belongs to all the people of China and is respected by the entire world," the Chinese president said, noting that his "contributions surpass his errors," without criticising Mao and the bloody Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976. "His thoughts again encourage us to continue the edification of socialism with Chinese characteristics," Mr. Jiang said in a tribute that was dedicated as much to the current supreme leader, Mr. Deng, as it was to the father of Communist China.

Analysts said the speech was aimed at affirming that Mr. Deng was the rightful heir of Mao.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iranian official congratulates Majali

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Sunday received a message from Iranian First Vice President Hassan Hubaibi, congratulating him on the vote of confidence won by his government early December. The message was delivered to Dr. Majali by the Iranian ambassador to Jordan, Ahmad Distmaljian, who visited the Prime Ministry Saturday. Dr. Majali and the Iranian ambassador discussed bilateral relations and issues of mutual interest. In a statement to the Jordanian News Agency, Petra, following his meeting with Dr. Majali, the Iranian ambassador said bilateral relations will be further enhanced through the dedication and keen interest of the Jordanian and Iranian leaderships. Mr. Distmaljian said Arab-Iranian relations are improving and stressed that Iran is interested in developing its relations with the Arab countries. He said that Iran, which has tremendous human and economic resources, can play a major role in establishing peace and stability in this region, through cooperation with Arab countries.

Sarairoh commends NAF projects

KARAK (Petra) — Director of the Social Development Department in Karak Governorate Ahmad Al Sarairoh Sunday stressed the importance of encouraging families benefiting from rehabilitation projects sponsored by the National Aid Fund (NAF) to launch small income-generating projects to increase their income. Mr. Sarairoh commended the feasibility of such projects, saying they are beneficial to needy families in financial terms and in terms of providing job opportunities to these families.

Chinese trade delegation due for talks

AMMAN (Petra) — A Chinese commercial delegation, headed by director of the Chinese Council for promotion of International Trade, arrives here on Jan. 12 on a six-day visit for talks with senior Jordanian officials on means of developing bilateral relations. The volume of trade is currently in favour of China. Jordan imported JD 52 million worth of Chinese goods last year, while the Jordanian exports to China in 1991 totalled JD 32.5 million.

Party seeks licensing

AMMAN (Petra) — A new political party Saturday sought licence from the Ministry of Interior, to become the 22nd licensed political party. The party, known as the "Jordan Arab Constitutional Front," elected Millham Al Tal as Secretary General. The new party, which includes 65 founding members, was the first political organisation to call on all political powers in the country to work in accordance with the Jordanian Constitution. The front secretary general said the front first appeared as a political organisation in 1975.

National number can be obtained abroad

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordanians working or living abroad who hold family registration books can have the national registration numbers fixed to their books, through the Jordanian embassies in the countries where they live or work, according to Director General of the Passports and Civil Registration Department Nasouh Muhayyeddin. The embassy concerned can send a photocopy of the family book to the Civil Registration Department to affix the national number. Once this is done, the photocopy with the national number is sent back to the embassy. Mr. Muhayyeddin said any Jordanian living or working abroad can also have his passport of family registration book renewed through the embassy concerned. Jordanians wishing to get family registration books for the first time have to send their papers through the embassy which, in turn, will send the passports to the Civil Registration Department for issuance.

Guerrilla attack kills civilian in Lebanon

MARJAYOUN (R) — One civilian was killed and two were wounded Sunday when guerrillas fired machineguns at a crossing in Israel's South Lebanon "security zone," security sources said. They said the Hamra passageway into the western sector of the enclave came under machinegun fire from guerrillas to the north as civilians were crossing. None of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militiamen manning the crossing were hurt but three civilians were wounded and rushed to a hospital for United Nations peacekeepers at the frontier town of Naqura, the sources added. One of the civilians later died of his wounds at the hospital. No group claimed responsibility for the attack.

Kuwaiti court reopens Bush plot trial

KUWAIT (AP) — A verdict against 14 Iraqis and Kuwaitis charged with plotting to assassinate former President George Bush was postponed Saturday by a court seeking more evidence from a key witness. Judge Salah Al Fahad, president of the three-member state security court, said the tribunal wanted to reconvene Feb. 5 to further question Abdul Samad Al Shatti, the state security officer who headed the investigation. "There are points the court would like explained," Mr. Fahad said, adding only that the points pertained to "the role of the defendants in the case." No date was given for a new verdict. The court has been hearing the case since June 5.

Kuwaiti Islamists plan alcohol crackdown

KUWAIT (R) — Islamist MPs in Kuwait want to create a public authority to curb illicit trade and consumption of alcohol, a deputy said in remarks published Sunday. "No drinks, no matter what the occasion," Mubarak Al Duwailah was quoted as saying by the English-language Kuwait Times. He said Islamist colleagues in the assembly were drafting a bill to set up a public authority against alcohol. "We are going to move the bill soon and I think it is going to pass without resistance," said Mr. Duwailah, of the Muslim fundamentalist Islamic Constitutional Movement. "We will then move to pressure the Interior Ministry into more vigilance." Alcohol has long been banned in Kuwait but bottling, especially from southern Iraq, has survived the prohibition.

Colombo to expel Red Cross official

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lanka is to expel an official of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for an alleged bid to smuggle banned items to the island's embattled north, the Sunday Times said here. The newspaper said the government would raise with the Geneva-based ICRC an incident in northern Vavuniya Thursday in which one of its foreign workers was held for alleged trying to smuggle batteries to rebel-held areas. The discussions with the ICRC would be "a prelude to this official being declared persona non grata and ordered to leave the country," the Sunday Times said. The newspaper identified the foreigner as Bernard, and gave no nationality.

Tamils to execute ex-leader for treason

COLOMBO (R) — A former high leader of Sri Lanka's Tamil rebels and 120 of his followers are likely to be executed next month for betraying the organisation, the Sunday Observer said. The newspaper said Gopalaswamy Mahendrarajah, former deputy leader of the guerrilla group Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, and 120 followers would be executed on Jan. 16 — first anniversary of the death of a Tamil rebel leader in an incident involving the Indian. The Sunday Observer, quoting informed sources in the north, said Tamil rebel Sathasivam Krishnakumar had been accompanying a consignment of rebel arms and ammunition in January when his ship was intercepted by the Indian navy. Refusing to surrender, Krishnakumar died and the ship and its cargo were destroyed in an explosion that he triggered.

IRA truce ends; peace chances cloudy

BELFAST (Agencies) — Northern Ireland counted down to the end of a three-day Irish Republican Army (IRA) truce at midnight and awaited the group's verdict on an Anglo-Irish peace package.

Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds appealed to the IRA in remarks published on Sunday to shelve its reservations about the plan, declare peace and work out the details later. "Peace is the first and essential priority. We should not let ourselves be sidetracked into the many questions that will have to be solved in the future," he said.

"Everything else can be settled in detailed discussion or negotiation later," he wrote in the Belfast Sunday Life.

His remarks were aimed at the IRA, which has waged a violent campaign against British rule in Northern Ireland for the past 25 years, and its political wing, Sinn Fein, which has given the package a cool response.

The IRA's customary three-day Christmas truce ended at midnight (GMT) on Sunday when security forces will be back on alert against bombings and snipings which accounted for 14 of the province's 83 guerrilla-related deaths in 1993.

But republican sources said Sinn Fein was unlikely to endorse the package or press the IRA to end its war until it had writing concessions out of the British and Irish governments.

They said they could not rule out more attacks as Sinn Fein and the IRA leadership weigh the next moves in its campaign for the unification of Northern Ireland with the Republic.

Both London and Dublin have rejected the prospect of talks with Sinn Fein in connection with the Dec. 15 deal, known as the Downing Street Declaration after British Prime Minister John Major's official London residence, but the sources said Sinn Fein was hoping to cash in on signs that the Irish government might be more pliable than Britain.

The Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), one of the main Protestant paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland, has given its approval to the Anglo-Irish declaration on the province and is ready to halt its campaign of violence, the Sunday Times reported.

The Sunday Times based its report on an interview with Billy Giles, a 36-year-old prisoner who said he was speaking for all the 93 members of the UVF in jail.

Mr. Giles, who was on a temporary release from jail over Christmas, said the declaration by the British and Irish governments on Northern Ireland was "fair."

"The guys in jail have looked at this document and the feeling is that there is nothing in there which is worth killing people for," he said. "We are quite happy with what we see, and I think the provisions are pushed in a corner."

But he warned that this "is not going to make us lay down our arms right away. The ball is now in their court," he said referring to the IRA.

The Ulster Freedom Fighters, considered by police to be one of the most dangerous of the Protestant paramilitaries, has adopted a cautious attitude

to the document, the Sunday Times said, adding that its members were still holding discussions on the agreement.

Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Major closed ranks around the declaration last week but the sources said they appeared out of step at times.

Mr. Major has ruled out Sinn Fein calls for an amnesty for about 700 IRA prisoners who have been jailed for security offences.

But statements by Mr. Reynolds and his foreign minister, Dick Spring, have given Sinn Fein hope that there might be room for manoeuvre.

Mr. Spring told reporters last week that the issue of prisoners was something that might be broached "down the line," and after Sinn Fein had used its influence to get the IRA to end the war.

Mr. Spring said that the IRA had been killed according to its preliminary count.

State radio said dozens of houses were ripped apart by the landslide, leaving many families in Ras Al Ain homeless or in the care of emergency services.

"In total 130 houses were swept away," the radio said. "Ten people are still buried under the rubble now although a couple and a child were dug out a few hours after the landslide."

The radio quoted a rescue official as saying that digging people out was very difficult because of the brittle terrain and a heavy wind.

"We have cranes... but we can't use them because if we do we risk having more houses collapse," the official said.

Local residents described Ras Al Ain as a poor neighbourhood made up of some ramshackle buildings. State radio quoted one resident as saying the area was hit by a landslide last year.

Officials said some of the wrecked dwellings in the Ras Al Ain district had been built without the authorisation of the local authorities.

By midafternoon on Sunday rescue workers had unearthed 15 people crushed to death under the rubble while 62 — including 21 children — had been sent to hospital for treatment.

Ten people remained buried, state radio reported. Earlier, an official at Oran's main hospital told Reuters 17

lines were connected to new subscribers in Wadi Seer area Saturday, according to the dates of applying for the telephone service. He added that new telephones to subscribers covered by Marka and Sweileh will be connected as of Saturday, Jan. 1.

The Cabinet decided in September to increase the number of telephone lines connected to these three exchanges to meet the rising demand for the telephone service.

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Telecommunication Corporation (TCC) collected JD 116 million during the first 11 months of this year, according to the corporation's Director General Ahmad Al Nawawi.

In a statement to the Jordanian News Agency, Petra, Sunday, Mr. Nawawi said the corporation will carry out the biggest investment project during the period 1994-1997. Under the new project, which will cost JD 205 million, a total of 280,000 new telephone lines will be added. The corporation

gradually causing rain showers to fall over the entire Kingdom.

He added that in the Gulf of Aqaba it will be partly cloudy, with a chance of scattered showers.

Mr. Dmour said the temperatures will remain above average, with 18 degrees centigrade at day time, dropping to 7 degrees centigrade at night.

Slight rain fell in different areas of the Kingdom Thursday, the largest amount in Al Sagriet which received 4 millimetres of water and the least in Safawi, which received 0.1 millimetres.

While Mr. Waquid was speaking at Kabul's Gul Khana Palace, a rocket exploded inside the presidential palace, killing two soldiers, but he was unharmed.

"We have to carry on," he said. "We have no choice but to continue our mission and impose peace even if our decision is violated a hundred times."

The fighting in Tagoh, 70 kilometres east of Kabul, erupted two months ago. It involved forces of Mr. Hekmatyar and Former Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Masoud, who is allied with Mr. Rabbani.

Both sides have used heavy weapons and government jets have pounded Mr. Hekmatyar's bases, mainly in the eastern region.

Rival Afghan forces agree to local truce

KABUL (Agencies) — Rival forces of Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani and Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar have agreed to stop fighting in eastern Tagoh district, it was announced here Sunday.

A newly formed multi-party commission obtained the consent of the rival party leaders to end the two-month-long fighting from Monday morning.

Mr. Hekmatyar's deputy Qazi Amin Waqad told a press conference.

The proposed ceasefire follows a series of earlier accords which failed to hold between the heavily armed Afghan factions which took over Kabul following the collapse of the 14-year-old communist regime in April 1992.

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Both sides have used heavy weapons and government jets have pounded Mr. Hekmatyar's bases, mainly in the eastern region.

Police said the explosions, which occurred almost simultaneously at about 6:20 p.m. (1020 GMT), caused pandemonium among some 3,000 Roman Catholics present.

Some of those hurt were injured in the stampede.

A fourth explosive device was found beside a pew near the altar and was detonated by bomb experts.

Davao Police Chief Superintendent Rogelio Abadaya said that four people were killed, including 15-year-old Rachel Lu who died on the spot, and that 119 others were wounded, many seriously. He declined to comment on the suspects or any possible motive.

Davao City is about 960 kilometres south of Manila and is the largest city in Mindanao, the country's second largest island.

The Rev. Bong Dublin said he saw two of the grenades thrown by an assailant standing in the back of the cathedral as he was saying the offertory.

"I have no idea what the motives are but it is an inhuman act," he told a Manila radio station. He said he saw two people killed on the spot, one of whom he carried to the hospital.

Typhoon strikes

At least seven people were missing and 12,000 others made homeless in one province as Typhoon Nell tore across the southern Philippines Sunday, packing gale-force winds and heavy rain, officials said.

Nell ravaged Surigao Del Sur province with winds gusting up to 150 kilometres per hour en route for the northern tip of the country's main southern island of Mindanao, the Manila weather bureau said.

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Landslide kills 15, injures 62 in Oran

ALGIERS (Agencies) — A landslide killed 15 people and injured 62 others, including 21 children, when the slide leveled about 130 houses in a working-class district of Oran in western Algeria, rescue workers said Sunday.

Rescue workers were trying to free several people still trapped in the rubble following Saturday night's disaster, but were having to use light tools because of the fragility of the ground.

Officials said some of the wrecked dwellings in the Ras Al Ain district had been built without the authorisation of the local authorities.

By midafternoon on Sunday rescue workers had unearthed 15 people crushed to death under the rubble while 62 — including 21 children — had been sent to hospital for treatment.

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Nej Sur province with winds gusting up to 150 kilometres per hour en route for the northern tip of the country's main southern island of Mindanao, the Manila weather bureau said.

Clinton takes part in family snowball fight

WASHINGTON (R) — The festive mood of the holiday season bubbled over onto the White House grounds late Christmas night as the first family took aim at each other with snowballs. President Bill Clinton and his family had just returned from the Will Rogers Folies at the Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts when playful bedlam erupted in front of the south portion. With Secret Service agents looking on a bit nervously, the president, his brother, Roger, and a handful of others in the first party indulged in the remnants of the season's first snow in the nation's capital. When last seen, a gleeful Mr. Clinton was scooping up a wet snowball, and with a left-handed delivery, hurling a high one over the entrance's canopy. It landed with a splat on the driveway.

But statements by Mr. Reynolds and his foreign minister, Dick Spring, have given Sinn Fein hope that there might be room for manoeuvre.

Mr. Spring told reporters last week that the issue of prisoners was something that might be broached "down the line," and after Sinn Fein had used its influence to get the IRA to end the war.

Mr. Spring said that the IRA had been killed according to its preliminary count.

State radio said dozens of houses were ripped apart by the landslide, leaving many families in Ras Al Ain homeless or in the care of emergency services.

"In total 130 houses were swept away," the radio said. "Ten people are still buried under the rubble now although a couple and a child were dug out a few hours after the landslide."

The radio quoted a rescue official as saying that digging people out was very difficult because of the brittle terrain and a heavy wind.

"We have cranes... but we can't use them because if we do we risk having more houses collapse," the official said.

Local residents described Ras Al Ain as a poor neighbourhood made up of some ramshackle buildings. State radio quoted one resident as saying the area was hit by a landslide last year.

Officials said some of the wrecked dwellings in the Ras Al Ain district had been built without the authorisation of the local authorities.

By midafternoon on Sunday rescue workers had unearthed 15 people crushed to death under the rubble while 62 — including 21 children — had been sent to hospital